

FIRST HORROR-FYING ISSUE!

HORROR



NO. 1
OCT

THE VAULT OF



150
100
CANADA

HORROR

INTRODUCING A NEW TREND IN MAGAZINES...
**ILLUSTRATED
SUSPENSE STORIES**
WE DARE YOU TO READ!

... AND HERE WE SEE THE *STRETCH-RACK*, ONE OF THE MOST DIABOLICAL INSTRUMENTS OF MEDIEVAL TORTURE EVER CONCEIVED! WATCH THE ACTION OF THE RACK UPON THE *WAX DUMMY* WHEN I PUT THIS MECHANICAL DISPLAY INTO OPERATION!

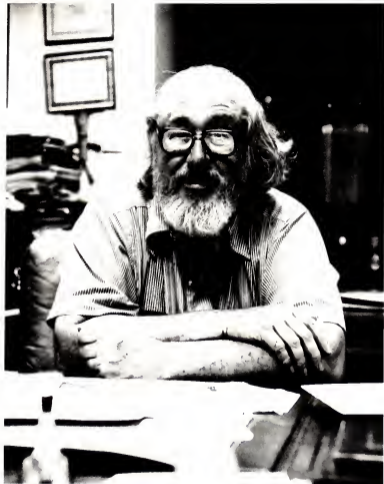
EXHIBIT #2
ROBIN HOOD
PRESENTED BY GAMES
WAX MUSEUM

GOOD LORD... CAN'T THEY SEE I'M ALIVE... NOT A WAX DUMMY! I'M FLESH AND BLOOD... PLEASE SOMEONE, HELP ME...



EXHIBIT # 3
STRETCH-RACK.
TORTURE DEVICE
USED IN THE
MIDDLE AGES.
GAMES WAX MUSEUM.





1980 photo by Russ Cochran

This new series of EC reprints is lovingly dedicated to the memory of
William M. Gaines (1922-1992)

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THE VAULT OF HORROR!

AH, WE MEET AGAIN, DEAR READER! HEH, HEH, HEH... WELCOME... WELCOME ONCE MORE TO THE VAULT OF HORROR! THIS TIME I HAVE BROUGHT OUT A SPECIAL STORY FOR YOU THAT WILL CHILL THE BLOOD IN YOUR VEINS... AND PERHAPS MAKE YOU STOP AND WONDER A MOMENT WHEN NEXT YOU MEET YOUR BEST FRIEND... HEH, HEH! THIS LITERARY GEM OF HORRIBLE UNPLEASANTRIES IS, OF COURSE, FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION, AND I CALL IT...

PORTRAIT IN WAX!



NOW...LET'S SEE...
OUR STORY OPENS
IN PARIS IN THE
MIDDLE 1830'S!
IN A SQUALID
DWELLING ON
THE LEFT BANK,
WE FIND TWO
STRUGGLING
YOUNG ARTISTS...



ROBERT WAS A STUDIOUS PERSON,
AND TRULY AN ARTISTIC GENIUS .
BUT WITH NO DESIRE FOR FAME! HE
WAS CONTENT TO WORK DAY AND
NIGHT PRODUCING HIS MASTERPIECES

“AH!” LOOK HENRY! I HAVE
FINISHED ANOTHER ETCHING!



HENRY, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS PRECISELY THE
REVERSE! HE HAD NO TALENT WHATSOEVER...
AND HIS AMBITION AND JEALOUSY WERE RAMPANT!

THAT FOOL! THAT IDIOTIC FOOL! HE COULD SELL
HIS ETCHINGS... HE COULD BE RICH... FAMOUS... AND
YET HE DOESN'T CARE...



... BUT I CARE! PERHAPS IF I SOLD
JUST ONE... HE'D NEVER KNOW!
AND I COULD ASK A GOOD PRICE



AND SO, SOME HOURS LATER, AT
AN ART BUYER'S OFFICE...

“AMAZING!” M'SIEU, I WILL PAY
ANY PRICE YOU ASK, BUT I
MUST HAVE THIS ETCHING! IT
IS SUPERB! YOU
ARE A GENIUS!



“AH. THANK YOU,
SIR! I ER... I
MAY HAVE OTHERS
IF YOU...”

OTHERS? M'SIEU, I WILL GLADLY
PAY YOU ANY PRICE FOR ANY OF
YOUR WORK. PROVIDED
YOU SELL TO ME ONLY!

THIS IS
BETTER
THAN I EXPECTED!



THEN IT IS AGREED!

HA! HA! THIS IS TOO GOOD! BY SELLING ROBERT'S
ETCHINGS AS MY OWN TO THAT GULLIBLE BUYER, I CAN
RETIRE FOR LIFE AND AMASS A FORTUNE!



HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!

YES, DEAR READER, IT WAS QUITE A SET-UP FOR HENRY!
HE SOLD A NUMBER OF ROBERT'S WORKS AND HIS POCKETS
JINGLED MERRILY... ALL WENT WELL UNTIL ONE DAY...

HENRY! HENRY! YOU BOUNDER! HOW COULD YOU
DO SUCH A THING?! HOW COULD YOU BE SUCH
A CAD AS TO SELL MY WORK
AND CLAIM IT TO BE
YOURS?



WH-WHA...? ROBERT
HOW... HOW DID YOU FIND OUT?



ROBERT ALWAYS KEEPS A VAT OF ACID IN THE BACK STOREROOM... USES IT FOR HIS ETCHINGS! THE VAT SHOULD BE BIG ENOUGH... PLENTY BIG ENOUGH...



THE ACID SHOULD DESTROY HIM COMPLETELY! AND NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW... NO ONE WILL QUESTION MY RIGHT TO HIS WORKS... I'LL BE RICH...



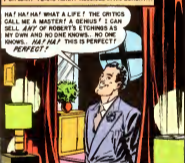
...T-T-THERE! IT'S... DONE! (GLAACK!) I... I SUDDENLY FEEL A TRIFLE... SICK! BETTER GET BACK TO MY ROOM... I'LL FEEL BETTER THERE... HA! HA! ROBERT'S FABULOUS MASTERPIECES... THEY'RE ALL MINE!



HENRY IMMEDIATELY LEFT PARIS AND MOVED TO LONDON ALREADY HIS NAME HAD PRECEDED HIM AND WITH EVERY SALE HIS FAME AND WEALTH GREW...



FOR MANY YEARS HENRY REJOICED IN HIS LUXURY...



HA! HA! HA! WHAT A LIFE! THE CRITICS CALL ME A MASTER! A GENIUS! I CAN SELL ANY OF ROBERT'S ETCHINGS AS MY OWN AND NO ONE KNOWS... NO ONE KNOWS... HA! HA! THIS IS PERFECT! PERFECT!

BUT ONE DAY, THERE CAME A SHOCKING REALIZATION...



GREAT SCOTT! THIS IS TERRIBLE! I'VE ONLY A FEW OF ROBERT'S WORKS LEFT! THEY WON'T LAST LONG... AND WHAT WILL I DO WHEN THEY'RE GONE? WHAT WILL I DO?

I COULD NEVER DUPLICATE HIS TECHNIQUE AND WITHOUT HIS WORK I WON'T BE ABLE TO MAKE ANOTHER DIME! I'VE GOT TO THINK OF SOMETHING... GOT TO THINK...



IT WAS SEVERAL DAYS AFTER THIS DISCOVERY, DEAR READER, THAT HENRY RECEIVED WORD THAT HIS CLOSE FRIEND, LORD JAMES GHERRINGWOOD, HAD DIED... AND IT WAS BUT A WEEK AFTER THE FUNERAL THAT A LETTER ARRIVED...

DEAR SIR:
BECAUSE OF YOUR CLOSE FRIENDSHIP WITH THE LATE LORD GHERRINGWOOD, I THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING THAT A BEAUTIFUL STATUE OF HIM HAS BEEN CREATED BY AN UNKNOWN SCULPTOR LIVING AT 55 THAMESBRIDGE ROAD. YOU WOULD DO WELL TO VIEW IT...

HEM... NO SIGNATURE...

BAH!



ER... I AM INFORMED YOU HAVE A STATUE OF THE LATE LORD JAMES GHERRINGWOOD. HE WAS A VERY DEAR FRIEND OF MINE! I SHOULD LIKE VERY MUCH TO SEE IT!

YES... YES, OF COURSE! DO COME IN...

WHA... WHY, THIS STATUE LOOKS REAL! LIKE FLESH AND BLOOD! IT'S AMAZING! HOW WERE YOU ABLE TO GIVE IT SUCH A LIFE-LIKE QUALITY, MR... ER...

MY NAME IS JULES VENDETTE! THE STATUE IS MADE OF WAX! I HAVE BEEN EXPERIMENTING WITH THIS PROCESS FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS...





YOUR WORK BORDERS ON **GENIUS**? I WANT TO PURCHASE THIS... ER... WAIT... I WISH TO THINK A MOMENT...

AS YOU WISH, SIR...

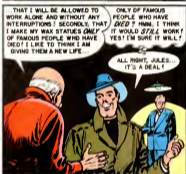


I'VE FOUND ANOTHER **GENIUS**? I MIGHT BE ABLE TO CAPITALIZE ON **AWW** AS I DID WITH ROBERT? THE STUPID PUBLIC WOULD PAY A GREAT DEAL TO SEE SUCH STATUES OF FAMOUS PEOPLE... YES! A MUSEUM! NOW IF VENDETTE WILL ONLY COOPERATE...



JULES, I HAVE A PROPOSITION FOR YOU! I WANT TO OPEN A MUSEUM... A MUSEUM THAT WILL HOUSE YOUR WAX STATUES OF FAMOUS PEOPLE! ARE YOU INTERESTED? I COULD PAY YOU WELL, MY FRIEND...

THE MONEY DOES NOT MATTER. I WILL ACCEPT YOUR PROPOSAL ON TWO CONDITIONS! FIRST...



...THAT I WILL BE ALLOWED TO WORK ALONE AND WITHOUT ANY INTERRUPTIONS! SECONDLY, THAT I MAKE MY WAX STATUES ONLY OF FAMOUS PEOPLE WHO HAVE DIED! I LIKE TO THINK I AM GIVING THEM A NEW LIFE...

ONLY OF FAMOUS PEOPLE WHO HAVE DIED? HMM... I THINK IT WOULD **STALL** WORK! YES! I'M SURE IT WILL!

ALL RIGHT, JULES... IT'S A DEAL!



HENRY'S MUSEUM OPENED, AND ART CRITICS WERE ASTONISHED BY THE REALISTIC QUALITY OF THE WAX FIGURES...

HENRY, OLD BOY, YOU'VE DONE IT AGAIN! FIRST, YOUR ETCHINGS... AND NOW THIS!

YOU'VE SURPASSED YOURSELF, HENRY! IT'S SIMPLY INCREDIBLE HOW LIFE-LIKE YOUR STATUES ARE!



AND HENRY AGAIN LOLLED IN THE LAP OF HIS NEW WEALTH...

HA! HA! HA! HENRY, YOU'RE A GENIUS! IN YOUR OWN RIGHT, YOU'RE A GENIUS! I'M REALLY PROUD OF YOU!

YES, FRIENDS, HENRY WAS PROUD! THE FAME OF HIS WAX MUSEUM SPREAD LIKE WILDFIRE. WHENEVER A FAMOUS PERSONALITY DIED, HIS OR HER WAX REPLICATION WOULD APPEAR IN THE MUSEUM A WEEK OR SO LATER...

HOW BEAUTIFUL!
THE STATUE LOOKS
AS ALIVE AS YOU
OR I!

SO REAL!
MAGNIFICENT!



IT REACHED A POINT WHERE IT WAS CONSIDERED A "MUST" FOR ANY NOTE-ABLE WHO DIED, TO HAVE THEIR FAGES-IMILE APPEAR.

MY UNCLE, SIR GLIVE BERGH, DIED LAST EVENING! I, AH, WOULD PAY A GREAT DEAL IF YOU COULD ER... ASSURE ME THAT HIS STATUE WILL BE IN YOUR MUSEUM.

I, AH, I THINK IT CAN BE ARRANGED!



AND SO IT WENT... UNTIL, ONE DAY...

HAVE TO MAKE ROOM FOR A NEW STATUE... JUST MOVE THIS ONE A BIT... OOPS!



DRA! I'VE BROKEN THE GREAT SCOTT! AM I SEEING THINGS? BENEATH THIS THIN LAYER OF WAX... A... A HUMAN HAND!



WHAT TH...? WHY, THIS IS THE CORPSE OF THOMAS DOWNE MERELY COVERED WITH A THIN COATING OF WAX... JULES! JULES!



CHEAT! FAKER! THIEF! NOW I KNOW WHY YOU ONLY WANTED TO MAKE STATUES OF DEAD PEOPLE! SO YOU COULD STEAL THEIR BONES AND COAT THEM WITH WAX! GRAVE ROBBER! GRAVE ROBBER!

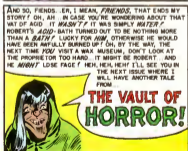
HA! HA! HA!
HA! HA!
HA! HA! HA!



I'LL BE RUINED, YOU FRIEND! RUNNED! STOP LAUGHING!

HA! HA! HA! PRECISELY MY PLAN, HENRY! I SENT YOU THAT LETTER TELLING ABOUT THE STATUE I HAD MADE OF LORD CHERRINGWOOD! I WANTED YOU TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ME! I PLANNED ALL THIS!





IF YOU LIKE THE STORIES IN THIS BOOK, WON'T YOU WRITE TO: RUSS COCHRAN, POB 459, WEST PLAINS, MO 65775?

MY NAME IS WALTER MALLORY. I AM AN ENGLISHMAN, AND UNTIL RECENTLY, THOUGHT MYSELF PERFECTLY SANE AND NORMAL, AND THEN, WHEN THOSE HORRIBLE CHANGES CAME OVER MY BODY, WHEN MY BLOOD HUNGRED TO KILL AND RAVEN IN THE FULL OF THE MOON, I BECAME PART OF...

The WEREWOLF Legend



ANOTHER SUSPENSE STORY
THE VAULT OF
HORROR!

IT BEGAN IN A DEEP, DENSE WOOD, JUST OUTSIDE MALLORY DENE, CLOSE TO THE MOORS OF DEVON. I WAS NOT MYSELF! I WAS SOME SHAGGY, HAIRY MONSTER.

MOON MAKING MY BLOOD BOIL! MAKING ME... HUNGRY! I AM NO MAN... NOT ANYMORE! I AM... A BEAST!

AN... SOMEONE APPROACHES!



HE HEARD MY POUNDING FEET. HE TURNED A WHITE FACE TOWARD ME...AND SCREAMED...



HE CANNOT ESCAPE ME!



HE RAN! THERE WAS FEAR IN HIS HEART THAT DROVE HIS LESS...FEAR THAT MADE ME JOYOUS AND EXULTANT! I WAS A BEAST...AFTER MY PREY!

I LEAPED! WEAKLY, HE LOST HIS BALANCE AND FELL. A GROWL RUMBLLED IN MY CHEST.



TONIGHT... BY THE LIGHT OF THE MOON... I WILL KILL!

THERE IS A BLANK SPOT IN MY MIND AFTER THAT. DIMLY I RECALL A BED...TOSSING...TURNING...MOANING IN MY SLEEP. AND THEN THERE WAS MORNING BRIGHTNESS...



WHY...IT'S DIVERSITY... AND...AND THAT MUST HAVE BEEN...SOME AWFUL KIND OF...NIGHTMARE!

IT WASN'T A DREAM...THERE IS BLOOD ON THE COUNTERTAP AND SHEET...I...I...



IN RELIEF I STAGGERED TO THE BATHROOM MIRROR...AND STARED INTO A HAIRY, UGLY SMUT...



MERCIFULLY, I FAINTED! WHEN I AWAKENED, FOGGS THE BUTLER WAS THRUSTING HIS HEAD THROUGH THE DOOR.



YOUR COUSIN, SIR GREGORY, YES - WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF YOU WILL JOIN HIM FOR BREAKFAST, SIR? YES, I'LL BE DOWN DIRECTLY!



The next Mallory to possess the lycanthropic germ in his blood was Dennis, Baron of Munscrief. 'Tis said of him that he ran with a pack of wolves and was himself a werewolf of all...



... down through the years the taint descended. The last known Mallory werewolf was Arthur, in 1827. He was cornered and shot by an angry mob...



NOT THE LAST! THE HEREDITARY TAINT HAS COME DOWN TO ME... SOMETHING IN MY BLOOD... THAT MAKES ME LIKE THE BEAST! THAT MAKES ME... WANT TO KILL!



HOLLOW-EYED, I STAGGERED UP TO MY BEDROOM THAT NIGHT. I HAD TAKEN A LONG WALK OVER THE MOORS. I WAS TIRED. I WOULD SLEEP DEEPLY...



I'M EXHAUSTED! TONIGHT I WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RUN IN THE WOODS AGAIN... TIRED... GOING TO SLEEP... SLEEP...

AND THEN... ABRUPTLY... I AWOK! I FELT HAIR GROWING ON MY CHEEKS... FELT MY TEETH LENGTHENING... BECOMING FANGS.



WANT TO RUN FREE... RUN IN THE WOODS!



GOT TO GET IN THE OPEN... BREATHE THE CLEAN AIR... FIND PREY!



I FELT THE COOL NIGHT AIR ON MY RAINY FACE AS I RAN FREELY, EFFORTLESSLY, LIKE THE INHUMAN WOLF I HAD BECOME...



ONCE I PAUSED, TO SHIFF AT THE BREEZE? I SMELT A MAN! MY TONGUE SWELLED AND MY JAWS DRIPPED SALIVA...



HE IS NOT FAR AWAY! I WILL BE ABLE TO CATCH HIM EASILY...

BUT I NECKEDED WITHOUT THE HORSE. THE ANIMAL SCENTED ME... SHIED IN FRIGHT.



EASY, BOY! EASY THERE! WHAT IS IT THAT MAKES YOU SO AFRAID?



OO YOU HEAR... OHHH? I SEE HIM --- THE WENEWOLF!

THE HORSE BOLTED IN PANIC! HIS MASTER, STRICKEN DUMB, QUINTED HIM FURIOUSLY... BUT STILL I GAINED... FOR I RAN AS NIMS THE WOLF... EFFONTLESSLY... TIMELESSLY...



NOW I... HAVE YOU?

HE WENT BACK AND DOWNWARDS, HIS SCREAM GURLING IN HIS THROAT...



AND NOW... THE KILL!



ONCE AGAIN I WOKE WITH BLOOD SMEARED ACROSS MY FACE, ONCE AGAIN I FAINTED! WHEN I RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS...



I MIGHT... AS WELL... FACE IT. I'M A **MONSTER!** TO PROTECT INNOCENT PEOPLE, SOMEBODY MUST... **KILL ME!**

I WENT TO THE CONSTABULARY IN TOWN...

I KNOW THIS SOUNDS RIDICULOUS... BUT THERE IS A LEGEND THAT OUR FAMILY CASTLE IS A LAIR FOR A WEREWOLF! PERHAPS IT WAS THIS CREATURE WHO KILLED THOSE MEN...



SO THERE'S A FAMILY WEREWOLF, EN? NOW'D YOU LEARN THAT?

FROM SOME OLD MANUSCRIPTS THAT HAVE BEEN IN OUR FAMILY FOR GENERATIONS? ER... MY COUSIN GREGORY SNOWED THEM TO ME!



I'M FROM SCOTLAND YARD. THIS STORY OF A WEREWOLF FASCINATES ME! SUPPOSE I HAVE YOUR CASTLE SURROUNDED IN CASE... AH... THE WEREWOLF APPEARS?

SPLENDID, SIR! JUST WHAT I WANT! AND WHEN YOU SEE THE... THE BEAST... **SHOOT TO KILL!**



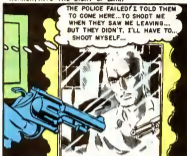
THAT NIGHT I WENT TO SEE WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE. IF I ROAMED THE MOONLIT MOORS AGAIN, THE POLICE WOULD SEE ME AND FIRE! BUT AS THE MOONLIGHT GREW STRONGER AND STRONGER, I FELT MY STRENGTH GROWING, AND MY TEETH LENGTHENING...



AGAIN I ROAMED THE FOREST. AGAIN A HUMAN FLED BEFORE ME! WHAT HAD HAPPENED? WHY HAD THE POLICE NOT...KILLED ME?



AGAIN I FLOATED UP THROUGH DIMLY REMEMBERED HORROR, INTO THE LIGHT OF DAY...



YOU! YOU DID COME FOR ME! THANK HEAVENS! NOW I'LL NEVER HURT ANYONE AGAIN!

YOU'VE NEVER HURT ANYONE AT ALL, WALTER MALLORY!



IT WAS YOUR COUSIN GREGORY... AN ACCOMPLISHED HYPNOTIST... WHO MURDERED THOSE THREE MEN! THEY HAD BEEN BLACK-MAILING HIM! HE PUT THAT WEREWOLF MAKEUP ON YOUR FACE AFTER HAVING HYPNOTIZED YOU. HE WORKED ON YOUR SUB-CONSCIOUS MIND CAUSING YOU TO BELIEVE THAT YOU COMMITTED THOSE SHASTLY CRIMES!



BUT... THEY WERE SO REAL? IF THEY WERE DREAMS...

THEY WERE REAL... TO YOU! THE HYPNOTIC MIND, IF SO DIRECTED, REMEMBERS WHAT IT HAS EXPERIENCED UNDER HYPNOTISM! GREGORY **COMMANDED** YOU TO REMEMBER!



HE HAD THESE MANUSCRIPTS PREPARED BY AN EXPERT TO FOOL YOU. HE HOPED REMORSE WOULD OVERCOME YOU... **WANTED** YOU TO KILL YOURSELF! YOU SEE, YOU STAND TO INHERIT A CONSIDERABLE FORTUNE! BY YOUR DEATH, HE WOULD HAVE BECOME NEXT OF KIN!



IT WAS A MALEVOLENT PLAN, AND YET A SIMPLE ONE! IF YOU FAILED TO KILL YOURSELF, HE WAS IN A POSITION TO ORDER YOU COMMITTED FOR INSANITY. BUT HE HAD TO GET RID OF THOSE BLACKMAILERS... AND WE CAUGHT HIM LEAVING THE HOUSE LAST NIGHT... FOLLOWED... AND COLLARED HIM. YOU'RE A **FREE** MAN, WALTER MALLORY!



FINGERS OF DEATH!

His fingers relaxed and he felt the body sliding away from him, toward the floor. The throat had blue marks as a result of the strangling! At last he had done it . . . killed Montrose with his own hands! Now to get hold of that dazzling gold chain . . . the priceless piece he had wanted so much that he was willing to let it force him to **MURDER!**

He whirled and faced the window, his mouth dropping open momentarily. Those blinding lights! Someone was driving into the alley, the headlights of the car exploding against his bloodshot eyes. He had to get out . . . they would find the body now in a matter of moments . . . he must get as far away from the corpse as possible! The gold chain . . . it would have to wait! He'd have to come back later when no one was around . . . he couldn't risk being caught here, for there was murder in the balance!

With a screwdriver he was able to pry open the heavy brass hinges of the mausoleum door! The door squealed open and he peered into the darkness beyond for a second before he slipped into the macabre stone-floored chamber. The funeral had taken place more than a week ago . . . and he had time in the

interim to sneak back to Montrose's house . . . go over it with a fine-toothed comb! But his search had been to no avail! . . . the gold chain had been nowhere to be found! And then the truth had struck him . . . that immensely valuable chain . . . it had probably been buried with Montrose! He would have it in his hands in a matter of moments . . . just as soon as he was able to open the coffin, take it from beside Montrose's cold cadaver!

It was there in Montrose's folded hands! He could see its dazzling surface gleaming under the rays of the small lamp he had placed at the head of the coffin. Montrose's hands held it . . . and he felt the perspiration forming on his forehead as he tried to pry it loose from those unyielding, icy fingers! He wrenched and pulled but still the fingers held him! In desperation, under the tiny flickering light, he was able to move the fingers slightly apart, and slipped the gold chain free! A leer formed on his face as he bent far forward under the light to examine the treasure he held at last! His face brushed against Montrose's skin . . . and he shuddered! And then he felt those fingers . . . the ones he had been able to pry apart . . . beginning to close again in death! Close inexorably . . . close like a steel trap! With a gasp he tried to wrench free . . . they were closing tighter . . . tighter . . . around his own throat! He felt the icy lips digging into the soft flesh of his throat . . . he struggled to free himself . . . tore at the dead hands desperately! But there was no resisting those hands . . . they were reightening in death . . . and he was being trapped by the very man he himself had strangled! A sob escaped from his lips . . . he felt a searing sensation in his lungs as he tried to gulp the air! And then everything was turning dark like a bulb that had been burnt out! And he was falling . . . falling . . .



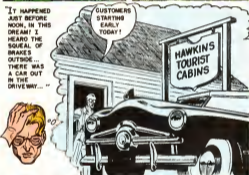
NEVER HAD TOM HAWKINS KNOWN SUCH FEAR BEFORE... NEVER HAD DEATH SEEMED SO TERRIBLY REAL AND CLOSE TO HIM AS IT DID THE NIGHT OF HIS TERRIBLE DREAM! HE HAD AWAKENED SHAKING WITH UNCONTROLLABLE DREAD OF THIS...

HORROR in the NIGHT



NINE-THIRTY, IN THE OFFICE OF THE HAWKING TOURIST COLONY ON ROUTE 6.





"I WAS BUSY ALL DAY, IN THAT STRANGE DREAM OF NINE... BUT I COULDN'T GET THE THOUGHT OUT OF MY MIND THAT TRAGEDY WAS CLOSE BY... THAT THE MAN AND HIS WIFE WERE DOOMED TO SOME HORRIBLE FATE!"

THEY'RE LEAVING IN THE MORNING, HE SAID... THE SOONER THE BETTER! S-SOMETHING ABOUT HER... SOMETHING UNEARTHLY!



"SOMEHOW... BY SOME STRANGE POWER THAT CAN BE EXPLAINED ONLY BY THE VERY NATURE OF DREAMS, I WAS IN CABIN TEN THAT NIGHT! NOT IN THE FLESH, OF COURSE... NOT AS TOM HAWKINS! MORE AS A HOVERING PRESENCE... A GHOST, YOU MIGHT SAY..."

I'M TURNING OUT THE LIGHT, EMILY! THOSE PILLS... THEY SHOULD MAKE YOU SLEEP...



H-HE'S ASLEEP... THAT'S THE ONLY TIME I HAVE MY FREEDOM... WHEN HE'S ASLEEP? I'LL DRESS... ESCAPE FROM HIM!



HE THINKS HE CAN KEEP ME A PRISONER, DOES HE? I'LL SHOW HIM... I'LL ESCAPE... AND THEN I CAN DO WHATEVER I PLEASE! NO ONE CAN STOP ME... ONCE I'M FREE!



"WITH BATEO BREATH I WATCHED THIS STRANGE STORY UNFOLD BEFORE MY EYES! THE FRONT DOOR SWUNG OPEN... THE GHOSTLY MOONLIGHT CREPT INTO THE ROOM..."



NO! IT CAN'T BE! PLEASE SAVE ME! IT'S REACHING OUT TO TOUCH ME... DEATH IS HERE!

N-NO... STAY AWAY FROM ME! YOU CAN'T TAKE ME... YOU CAN'T CLAIM ME! DON'T TOUCH ME... DEATH!



I'LL KILL YOU BEFORE YOU CAN TOUCH ME! I'VE KILLED YOU BEFORE... WHEREVER I'VE MET YOU... I'LL KILL YOU AGAIN!



"MY MIND ROCKED WITH THE IMPLICATIONS OF WHAT MY ASTONISHED EYES WERE SEEING! THIS WOMAN... THIS STRANGE *MRS. SMITH*... SHE WAS *INSANE*... DRIVEN BY A MAD LUST TO *KILL!*"



"I FELT SICK... THIS APPARITION WHO HAD MATERIALIZED IN MY DREAM... THIS WILD WOMAN... HAD DESCENDED TO THE LEVEL OF THE PREDATORY BEASTS! SHE WAS RAGING, SKULKING MONSTER! I TRIED TO LEAVE THE CABIN... BUT I, TOO, WAS A PRISONER!"



"THESE WERE THE GUESTS WHO HAD COME TO OUR CABIN... THE MAN WITH THE WIFE WHO WAS A MAD MURDERER! A MURDERER ON THE LEVEL OF THE SAVAGE JUNGLE ANIMALS!"



YOU WON'T STOP ME! YOU PRETEND TO LOVE ME... BUT YOU REALLY HAVE ONLY HATRED FOR ME! I'LL KILL YOU... THE WAY I'VE MURDERED ALL THE OTHERS!



EMILY... IT'S YOUR HUSBAND! I WANT TO HELP... N-NO... HAVE MERCY... N-NO...

*I WAS HYPNOTIZED AS I WATCHED THE TERRIBLE SCENE TRANSPIRING BEFORE MY EYES! AND THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO... I WASN'T EVEN THERE! IT WAS NOTHING BUT AN AWFUL NIGHTMARE... AND I WAS TRAPPED IN IT!



E-EMILY... NOTHING I CAN DO! M-MUST KILL YOU...



...YOU'VE BECOME A WILD ANIMAL... YOU SCRATCH AND SLASH LIKE A TRAPPED TIGRESS! I'LL HAVE TO KILL YOU WITH MY OWN HANDS!

"RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES... A HORRIBLE MURDER WAS BEING COMMITTED! A WAVE OF NAUSEA PASSED OVER ME... I FELT FAINT... BUT MY EYES WERE RIVETED TO THE NIGHTMARE IN FRONT OF ME."

O-DEAD... I'VE KILLED HER! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN... EVER SINCE OUR BABY WAS KILLED... CLAIMED TO DEATH BY A CAT... THIS WOULD BE THE INEVITABLE END!



"IT WAS AS IF THE MAN WAS TELLING ME THE REASON FOR THE TRAGEDY THAT HAD JUST OCCURRED"

SHE'S BEEN A RAGING LUNATIC EVER SINCE THE ACCIDENT... KILLED EVERY ANIMAL CROSSING HER PATH... AND TRIED TO KILL HERSELF BY LEAPING INTO THE GRAVE WHERE THE BABY IS BURIED, WHENEVER SHE WAS ALONE NEAR THE GEMETERY!





AND THEN I WOKE UP, JIM... FEELING CERTAIN THAT I HAD SEEN SOMETHING THAT WAS NEVER MEANT FOR MORTAL EYES! I-IT WAS HORRIBLE!

TAKE IT EASY, TOM! IT'S PROBABLY YOUR NERVES! YOU'VE BEEN WORKING TOO HARD LATELY. JUST RELAX!



Y-YEAH... THAT'S IT! OVERWORK! OR MAYBE SOMETHING I ATE DIDN'T AGREE WITH ME, EH? I'M TIED UP IN KNOTS... THAT MUST HAVE BEEN THE REASON FOR THE NIGHTMARE! I'LL JUST FORGET THE WHOLE THING! HERE COMES A CAR... I'LL TAKE IT!

HAWKINS
TOURIST
CABINS



AND THANKS A LOT, JIM... YOU DON'T KNOW HOW I FELT ABOUT THIS. IT WAS AS IF... AS IF... I HAD PEEKED INTO THE FUTURE... AND SEEN SOMETHING AWFUL! THANKS FOR TALKING TO ME! I FEEL A THOUSAND PERCENT BETTER ALREADY!



GOT A CABIN FOR TWO... JUST FOR OVERNIGHT? WE'LL BE LEAVING EARLY IN THE MORNING...

W-WHAT? THOSE WORDS... T-THAT FACE?

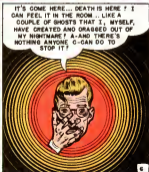


MR. AND MRS. SMITH... JOHN SMITH! FROM... ER... NEVADA? HEAD-ING EAST ALONG HIGHWAY SIX? GUESS THAT TAKES CARE OF THE REGISTRY ALL RIGHT!

NO! IT CAN'T BE!



I-IT MUSTN'T BE! P-PLEASE... GO BACK... DON'T STOP HERE! THE MAN... AND THE WOMAN... IT'S THEM... THE SAME TWO!



IT'S COME HERE... DEATH IS HERE? I CAN FEEL IT IN THE ROOM... LIKE A COUPLE OF GHOSTS THAT I, MYSELF, HAVE CREATED AND DRAGGED OUT OF MY NIGHTMARE! A-AND THERE'S NOTHING ANYONE CAN DO TO STOP IT!



THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

What? Hit the beaches for old EC, again?? You know it! Look out, you VAULT-VERMIN, 'cause Russ Cochran is going to reprint each 32-pg issue of VAULT, in chronological order, on a quarterly basis! This will replace the 64-pg line (referred to in this column, and our ads, as RCP VAULT, RCP CRYPT, etc.). Many of you beady-eyed readers know my first issue was numbered 12. Why? 'Cause my mag was created from WAR AGAINST CRIME, which topped out with issue #11.

I want to thank you for bringing back the old E.C. Comics particularly TALES FROM THE CRYPT, HAUNT OF FEAR, and VAULT OF HORROR. The scary and sarcastic overtones and gut-wrenching twists in each issue have a timeless quality I truly appreciate!

I have some questions that I was hoping you could answer:

1. Has the E.C. line been reprinted before your series or the Gladstone series?

2. What is the possibility of putting together some new artwork and stories for a new series of CRYPT???

3. Is there still a "Fan-addict" club??

Samuel W. Kingston
Sandy, UT

1) Yeah! East Coast Comix did 32-pagers some years ago—see Evan Lancot's letter this page.

2) It's possible, but I'd want the best. Wouldn't YOU?

3) I'm not running an official club no more, but there are bound to be wildcat operations out there. How about it? Step forward and identify, you fan-addicts.

—VK

I love your "Tales from the Crypt" comics I watch the series on HBO

One thing I want to know is The Crypt Keepers book, does that have real comics in it? When did you first start making comics?

Chris J. Mitchell
Prince George, VA

Well Chris, he stuffs a copy of his script in that book, with lines highlighted. See, he's a DUMMY!

Actually, just the cover art is peeted into the book for each show. These covers are drawn by Mike Vosberg. —VK

First of all, I just picked up TALES FROM THE CRYPT #6, and the difference in the quality of reproduction was noticeable immediately, the colors jump out at you, and the blacks are not muddy like they were before. Although it seems strange to see EC's reprinted in the flexographic process, they do look better now than any previous form of reprint (and I have them all, even the East Coast ones of the 70's).

Although I possess many reprints, and a dozen originals, I had never seen the contents of this issue before, the CRIME SUSPENSTORIES issue was good, but the TALES issue was terrific! Davis, Evans, Kamen, and Ingels were all masters of their form, and as usual, they did not disappoint.

Evan M. Lancot
Burlington, VT

Thanks for the good words, Even! I look even better in offset, and the Crypt-keeper and the Old Witch needed all the help they could get! (Even's got East Coast Comix reprints, and you can have some, too! See our ad elsewhere in this issue.) —VK

In the stores now (or available from us direct) are the first issues of NEW CRYPT, NEW WEIRD SCIENCE and NEW SHOCK. Out this month are NEW WEIRD FANTASY #1 and TWO-FISTED TALES #1. Coming next month: NEW HAUNT #1, NEW WEIRD 5-F #1 and NEW CRIME #1! To be sure of getting every issue of every title, why not SUBSCRIBE!

Send letters of comment to:
VAULT
RUSSELL COCHRAN
POB 466
WEST PLAINS MO 65775

THIS COMIC REPRINTS:
VAULT OF HORROR "#12" (#1, 1950)

Portrait in Wax
The Werewolf Legend
Horror in the Night
Terror Train

Johnny Craig
Harrison Wood
Harvey Kurtzman
Al Feldstein



TOOTH AND FANG!

The knife slashed down! These was a gasp then he straightened up and looked at the body of the paunchy circus owner, stretched there on the wooden floor one hand slowly relaxing from the canvas of the circus tent! He had done it . . . he would have to look around the headquarters tent fast! someone might come this way any minute!

He was bent over the tin box when he heard the footsteps! He straightened up as if he had been wound tight . . . and his eyes narrowed when he saw the three shadows standing toward the open flap of the tent! His heart raced ominously he felt the skin on his neck prickle! Those roustabouts . . . they were headed here! He slipped the wad of bills into his pocket and looked around the tent in desperation! He couldn't go out the front door of the tent . . . for they were sure to see him! And he would hang for the murder! There had to be another way out . . . there **MUST** be another escape!

And then his eyes noted the barred door at the opposite end of the tent! As if a cage had been backed up against the far end of the tent! That was how he would escape through that barred door! His hands fastened around the handles near the floor and he gave a sturdy yank . . . the door lifted up un-

der his weight! It was a matter of seconds before he stepped beyond the door . . . released it and heard it slam shut behind him! Then he whirled, and peering between the bars, saw the three roustabouts pausing at the entrance to the tent! If he could remain here until they went away . . . if he could remain hidden here behind the door, it would give him a little more time to think of how he was going to escape!

There was a low snarl behind him and he whirled . . . his eyes squinting into the darkness that surrounded him. His heart lurched inside him . . . not more than ten feet from him he saw those fiery eyes boning straight into his own! Cat's eyes, he realized with a shudder! And his own eyes had become accustomed to the light enough for him to know what it was that faced him . . . a snarling Panther! The lur at the back of its neck was rising stiff and straight . . . it was getting ready to spring at him!

He whirled, his hands tearing at the barred door. But it was rock fast! He had slammed it shut when he entered . . . it couldn't be opened from this side! His heart missed a beat . . . he was suddenly bathed in cold, prickling perspiration! He opened his mouth and screamed at the men who were now moving away from the front of the tent! He **MUST** attract their attention . . . before it was too late . . .

before . . . he shuddered to think of what would happen to him there in the cage with the raging Panther! He screamed, tilting his head back . . . but the sound which issued from his lips was drowned out by a more frightening sound . . . the panther emitting its blood-curdling roar as it prepared to leap! Drunkenly he turned, flattening himself against the wall . . . knowing that his voice could not be heard . . . that this time there **WAS** no escape for him! He saw the panther squat before it launched itself . . . and even as he stared at those fiery eyes, the pain came over him like a wave . . . and he knew . . . it was the end . . . the end . . .



HE WAS TRYING TO KILL ME! HE HATED ME! AND THEN, ONE NIGHT, HE ALMOST SUCCEEDED... THE NIGHT I RODE A...

TERROR TRAIN



ANOTHER SUSPENSE STORY
THE VAULT OF
HORROR!

IT ALL STARTED THE DAY I DECIDED TO RUN AWAY FROM RALPH! HE WAS GOING TO KILL ME! I KNEW THAT! I HAD TO GET AWAY! I PACKED A SMALL BAG AND HAILED A TAXI...

THE RAILROAD TERMINAL... AND PLEASE HURRY!

YES, MA'AM!



AS THE TAXI SPOKE DOWNTOWN, I Huddled IN THE CORNER OF THE SEAT... AFRAID THAT HE MIGHT SEE ME! RALPH HATED ME SO! I DON'T REMEMBER HOW IT STARTED BUT IT HAD DEVELOPED TO A POINT WHERE I FEARED FOR MY LIFE! I REMEMBER ONE DAY, RALPH CAME HOME WITH A PACKAGE...

WHAT DO YOU BUY, RALPH?

OH... NOTHING, GLORIA DEAR! SOMETHING FOR MY OWN PERSONAL USE!



IT WAS POISON! I HAD TO BE ON MY GUARD! I WATCHED THE BOTTLE CAREFULLY AND WHEN I NOTICED SOME OF THE POISON MISSING, I DIDN'T EAT... PRETENDING SOME EXCUSE! I WAS CAREFUL. HE FAILED THAT TIME!

I SAID... HERE'S THE TERMINAL, LADY!

OH...I SEE YOUR PARDON!



I PAID THE FARE, AND LOOKED UP AND DOWN THE STREET! I DIDN'T SEE RALPH! I RUSHED INTO THE STATION!

I... I'D LIKE A TICKET TO... TO... NEW YORK!

THAT'LL BE THIRTY-FOUR TEN, MA'AM!



I STUFFED THE TICKET INTO MY PURSE AND LOOKED AROUND! IF RALPH EVER CAUGHT ME DOING THIS... I DROVE THE THOUGHT FROM MY MIND! NO! I WOULD GET AWAY! I HAD TO! I WOULD BE SAFE THEN! I SAT DOWN ON A BENCH IN A CORNER OF THE WAITING ROOM, AND HID BEHIND A NEWSPAPER.



MY TRAIN WASN'T DUE FOR TWENTY MINUTES! SUPPOSE RALPH CALLED AT HOME? THERE WOULD BE NO ANSWER! HE WOULD KNOW! I THOUGHT OF THAT NIGHT LAST MONTH WHEN I AWOKE TO FIND RALPH STANDING OVER ME... A KITCHEN KNIFE IN HIS HAND...

RALPH!

I... I FOUND THIS KNIFE ON YOUR NIGHT TABLE, GLORIA! YOU... SHOULDN'T LEAVE THINGS LIKE THIS AROUND!



HE HAD STAMMERED OUT A LAME EXCUSE! HE WAS GOING TO MURDER ME AND I HAD DISCOVERED HIM IN TIME! I DIDN'T SLEEP THE REST OF THAT NIGHT... I JUST LAY THERE... LISTENING...

PARDON ME, MA'AM! THAT'S YOUR TRAIN! YOU'D BETTER HURRY OR YOU'LL MISS IT!

OH... THANK YOU!



I WENT OUT TO THE PLATFORM AND SCARCEO THE TRAIN! I FOUND MY SEAT! WHY DIDN'T WE START? I GLANCED OUT OF THE WINDOW! SOMEONE WAS RUNNING DOWN THE PLATFORM! IT... IT LOOKED LIKE...

RALPH!



AS THE TRAIN BEGAN TO MOVE, THE MAN SWUNG HIMSELF UP INTO THE CAR BEHIND MINE! I WASN'T SURE! IT COULD BE RALPH! IT... LOOKED LIKE HIM... AND YET... I WAS FRIGHTENED! IT WAS TOO LATE TO GET OFF! THE TRAIN WAS ON ITS WAY.

IT'S... IT'S JUST MY NERVES! I... I NEED A DRINK! I WONDER IF THERE'S A CLUB CAR ON THE TRAIN?

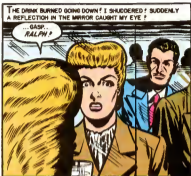




I MADE MY WAY TO THE CLUB CAR! IT WAS SMOKEY AND CROWDED! I SLIPPED ONTO A STOOL AT THE BAR...

WHAT'LL IT BE, LADY?

I... I'LL HAVE A SCOTCH AND SODA, PLEASE!



THE DRINK BURNED GOING DOWN! I SHUDDERED! SUDDENLY A REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR CAUGHT MY EYE!

...GASP... RALPH!



I WAS AFRAID TO TURN AROUND! IT WAS RALPH I HAD SEEN IN THE MIRROR! HAD HE SEEN ME? I STEPPED AWAY FROM THE BAR AND RAN FROM THE CAR!

OH... I BEG YOUR PARDON!

EXCUSE ME, LADY!



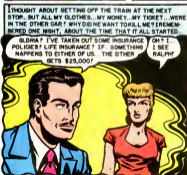
I HAD GONE OUT THE WRONG END OF THE CLUB CAR! I WAS IN A COACH, NOT A PULLMAN! IF I WANTED TO GET BACK TO MY CAR, I WOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE CLUB CAR AGAIN.

ER... IS THIS SEAT TAKEN?

WHY, NOT THAT I KNOW OF!



RALPH WOULDN'T LOOK FOR ME HERE IN THE COACHES! HE KNEW I ALWAYS TRAVELED PULLMAN! I SAT DOWN! I WOULD WAIT TILL IT WAS SAFE AND THEN SNEAK BACK TO MY BERTH!



I THOUGHT ABOUT GETTING OFF THE TRAIN AT THE NEXT STOP... BUT ALL MY CLOTHES... MY MONEY... MY TICKET... WERE IN THE OTHER CAR! WHY DID HE WANT TO KILL ME? I REMEMBERED ONE NIGHT, ABOUT THE TIME THAT IT ALL STARTED...

GLORIA! I'VE TAKEN OUT SOME INSURANCE POLICIES! LIFE INSURANCE! IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO EITHER OF US... THE OTHER GETS \$25,000!

OH! I... I SEE RALPH!



PERHAPS THAT WAS IT! THE MONEY! \$25,000 IS A LOT OF MONEY! SUDDENLY, MY HEART STOPPED! I FELT A HAND ON MY SHOULDER...

YOUR TICKET, MISS?

OH! I... I LEFT IT IN THE OTHER CAR!

THE CONDUCTOR LOOKED AT ME QUIZZICALLY! HE MUST HAVE THOUGHT I WAS TRYING TO RIDE FREE!

NO, REALLY! I'VE A BERTH BACK IN THE PULLMANS!

YOU'D BETTER SHOW ME, MISS!



AS WE PASSED THROUGH THE CLUB CAR AGAIN, I SEARCHED THE FACES OF THE PEOPLE! RALPH WASN'T THERE! PERHAPS I HAD MADE A MISTAKE! THE DRINK! MAYBE IT HAD BEEN THE SCOTCH AND SODA!

THIS IS MY BERTH! I'LL GET MY TICKET!

ALL RIGHT, MISS!



THE CONDUCTOR WAS SATISFIED! MY BERTH WAS MADE UP, AND SINCE I FELT A LITTLE CIZZY FROM THE DRINK, I DECIDED TO GET SOME SLEEP!

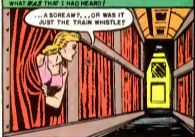
IT MUST HAVE BEEN SOMEONE WHO LOOKED LIKE RALPH! I'LL FEEL BETTER IN THE MORNING...



...AND SAFER, TOO! THE TRAIN, HURTLING THROUGH THE NIGHT, WAS PUTTING MORE AND MORE MILES BETWEEN RALPH AND ME! I CLOSED MY EYES! THE TRAIN RUMBLLED ON... AND ON... AND I FELT MYSELF DRIFTING INTO SLEEP... SLEEP...



SUDDENLY I WAS AWAKENED BY AN EAR-SPLITTING, PIERCING SHRIEK! I LOOKED OUT OF MY BERTH! THE CURTAINS ON THE OTHER BERTHS WERE ALL CLOSED... AND THE CAR WAS DARK EXCEPT FOR A SMALL LIGHT AT THE REAR! WHAT WAS THAT I HAD HEARD?



...A SCREAM?... OR WAS IT JUST THE TRAIN WHISTLE?

A BERTH AT THE FAR END OF THE CAR WAS MARKED "PORTER". I MADE MY WAY TOWARD IT! I'D ASK HIM IF HE HAD HEARD IT TOO... I PULLED ASIDE THE CURTAIN!



...GASP... NO! NO! EEEEEEEK!

IT WAS GHASTLY! HE WAS DEAD! COLD AND STIFF! HIS EYES, WIDE WITH HORROR... THE BEDCLOTHES SMEARED WITH BLOOD! I CLOSED THE CURTAINS...



HELP!

THERE WAS NO ANSWER! NO ONE STIRRED! I CRIED OUT AGAIN! COULDN'T THEY HEAR ME? FRANTICALLY, I TORE ASIDE THE CURTAINS OF THE NEXT BERTH.

AAAAAAAAAH!



IT WAS HORRIBLE! THE OCCUPANT OF *THAT* BERTH WAS DEAD, TOO! ICY FINGERS CLOSED ABOUT MY HEART! A WAVE OF NAUSEA SWEPT OVER ME AS I WENT FROM BERTH TO BERTH, FLINGING THE CURTAINS BACK! THEY WERE DEAD... ALL DEAD! I WAS ON A DEATH TRAIN! RALPH! IT WAS RALPH! HE WAS MAD!

HE MUST BE ON THE TRAIN...
LOOKING FOR ME...



SUDDENLY, I HEARD THE SHRIEK AGAIN... AND I WAS THROWN TO THE FLOOR! THIS TIME IT *HAD* BEEN THE SHRIEK OF BRAKES... THE TRAIN HAD COME TO A STOP.

THIS... THIS IS MY CHANCE!



I RAN TO THE END OF THE CAR AND LEAPED FROM THE TRAIN...

...MY CHANCE TO GET AWAY!



AS I STOOD BEHIND A TREE... WATCHING THE TRAIN BEGAN TO MOVE! SQUEAKING... STRAINING... SLOWLY... IT GAINED MOMENTUM! IT WAS PULLING AWAY... AND I HAD ESCAPED!

NO ONE GOT OFF WITH ME...
I... I'M SAFE!



I LOOKED AROUND ME! A HOUSE! I SAW A HOUSE ON THE TOP OF THE HILL... AND THERE WAS A LIGHT ON! I MADE MY WAY THROUGH THE GRASS TOWARD IT!

IF THEY HAVE A PHONE, I'LL CALL THE POLICE! THEY COULD STOP THE TRAIN AT THE NEXT STATION...



NEAR THE HOUSE, I NOTICED SOMETHING STRANGE! SOMEONE HAD BEEN DIGGING... A TAWNY BLACK PIT... THE SHAPE... OF...

A GRAVE!



NOW I WAS LETTING MY IMAGINATION GET THE BETTER OF ME! I PUSHED THE THOUGHT OUT OF MY MIND! WHY DID I THINK IT WAS A GRAVE? WHAT WAS SO STRANGE ABOUT AN EXCAVATION NEAR A FARM HOUSE? THEY WERE PROBABLY MAKING A WATER TROUGH! I KNOCKED ON THE DOOR...

ANYONE IN THERE? OPEN THE DOOR! PLEASE...



THERE WAS NO ANSWER. THEN, I HEARD THE LATCH CLICK AND THE DOOR SLOWLY SWUNG OPEN...THE RUSTY HINGES CREAKING...

H...HELLO? ANYONE...HOME?



I STEPPED INSIDE! I LOOKED AROUND! THE ROOM WAS BARE EXCEPT FOR...

...GASP... A COFFIN!



I SPUN AROUND! THE DOOR WAS CLOSED BEHIND ME...AND STANDING IN FRONT OF IT WAS...

RALPH?

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU, GLORIA!



HE GAUGHT ME IN A VISE-LIKE GRIP! I CRIED OUT! I STRUGGLED,BUT I COULD NOT FIGHT HIS OVERWHELMING STRENGTH!

NO NEED TO SCREAM, GLORIA. NO ONE WILL HEAR YOU.

LET ME GO! LET ME GO!



HE FORCED ME TO THE COFFIN!

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO ME,RALPH?

DO N'T YOU KNOW, GLDRIA?



I COULD DO NOTHING! HE CLDSE THE LID OF THE COFFIN... DOWN UPON ME... AND I HEARD THE SHARP BLOWS OF A HAMMER! HE WAS NAILING ME IN...

RALPH! PLEASE...HAVE MERCY!



THEN I FELT THE COFFIN BEING DRAGGED ACROSS THE FLOOR! I HEARD THE SQUEAK OF THE RUSTY HINGES AS RALPH OPENED THE DOOR...

HE'S TAKING ME OUTSIDE... TO... TO THAT GRAVE!



I FELT THE JAR AND HEARD THE HOLLOW BOOM OF THE COFFIN AS RALPH PUSHED ME INTO THE GRAVE... THEN HIS FIENDISH LAUGHTER... HIS HYSTERICAL RAVING...

GOOD-BYE, ELDRIA! SLEEP PEACEFULLY!



HE WAS FILLING IN THE GRAVE! THE SOFT EARTH THUDDED ON THE COFFIN LID! THEN... ALL WAS QUIET! I GUESS I BROKE DOWN AT THAT POINT...

HELP... SDB... HELP ME SOMEBODY... PLEASE... PLEASE!



I WAS CRAZED WITH FEAR! I WAS GOING TO SUFFOCATE... BURIED ALIVE BY A MADMAN... MY HUSBAND... RALPH! I POUNDED ON THE COFFIN! I COULD FEEL THE FLESH OF MY FISTS TEAR AS I POUNDED! I LOST ALL CONTROL! I SCREAMED AND BEAT THE SIDES OF THE COFFIN...



SUDDENLY THERE WAS A BLINDING LIGHT! I SAT UP WITH A START AND LOOKED AROUND ME...

HERE SHE IS, GENTLEMEN!

YOU'D BETTER STOP THAT RACKET, LADY. AND COME QUIETLY!



I... I HAD BEEN DREAMING! I WAS STILL IN MY BERTH ON THE TRAIN! AND RALPH, WITH PITY IN HIS EYES, WAS COMFORTING ME... STROKING MY HAND!

NO! KEEP AWAY! TAKE HIM AWAY FROM ME! HE WANTS TO KILL ME!

SURE, LADY! SURE! YOU COME WITH US! WE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU! HE WON'T HURT YOU! WE'LL SEE TO THAT!



THE MEN IN WHITE TOOK ME AWAY! THEY PUT ME IN A NICE HOUSE WITH NICE PEOPLE... A HOUSE THAT HAS BARS ON ALL THE WINDOWS SO RALPH CAN'T GET IN AND KILL ME! AND NOW I'M SAFE FROM HIM!

...AND THAT'S MY STORY! PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO COME AND... VISIT ME SOMETIME AGAIN?



THE END

HORROR



NO. 13

THE VAULT OF



REPRINT
EDITION

HORROR

FEATURING THE NEW TREND IN MAGAZINES.

ILLUSTRATED
SUSPENSE STORIES
WE DARE YOU TO READ!

GOOD LORD! THE
CASNET IS OPEN...HER BODY
IS SORRY EDGAR...DO YOU HEAR
ME? WHAT COULD HAVE
HAPPENED TO IT?



THE VAULT OF HORROR!

SO...WE MEET AGAIN, DEAR READER! WELCOME! WELCOME ONCE MORE TO THE VAULT OF HORROR! FOR THE BENEFIT OF ANY NEWCOMERS, I AM THE *KEEPER OF THE KEYS OF HORROR!* EACH ISSUE, I TELL YOU TALES FROM MY LARGEST COLLECTION OF CHILLING, HAIR-RAISING, SPINE-TINGLING STORIES... TALES THAT I *GUARANTEE!* WILL MAKE YOUR *BLOOD FREEZE* IN YOUR VEINS, AND THE HAIR ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK BRISTLE WITH *FEAR!* THIS TALE, I CALL...

THE DEAD WILL RETURN!

ALL RIGHT, FLO! THIS IS FAR ENOUGH!
PUSH HIM OVERBOARD...

YES, BERT...

THE BOAT WENT OVER THE SIDE OF THE SMALL SWAMP, AND SANK OUT OF SIGHT...

IN A COUPLE OF DAYS, HE'LL WASH ASHORE DOWN THE COAST AGAIN...

LET'S GO BACK, BEET? I FEEL CHILLED!



THE MAN CALLED BEET TURNED THE BOAT AROUND AND MADE FOR THE BEACH BELOW THE TOWERING LIGHTHOUSE

... AND WHEN THEY COME AND ASK YOU ABOUT HIM, YOU'LL TELL THEM HE'S AWAY ON A FISHING TRIP!

YES, BEET... I UNDERSTAND!



THE WOMAN, FLORENCE, STEPPED QUICKLY FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE AS IT SPOTTED THE BANG OF THE SHORE...

AND... WHEN THEY FIND HIS BODY... THEY'LL THINK THAT HE DROWNED AT SEA... AND THEN... THEN YOU'LL BE FREE TO MARRY ME?

YES, BEET? AND BIG MONEY... WE'LL HAVE HIS MONEY... OVER \$10,000? A FORTUNE?



THE TWO PEOPLE CLIMBED THE STEPS OF THE LIGHTHOUSE AND ENTERED.

... TALKING ABOUT THAT MONEY, WHERE DID YOUR HUSBAND GET IT?

I DON'T KNOW FOR SURE... BUT IT'S AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE...



I KNOW HE KEPT IT WELL HIDDEN!

WELL, WE MIGHT AS WELL START LOOKING FOR IT, SO AS WE CAN LAW GUTTA HIDE 'JUS' AS SOON AS THEY FIND HIS BODY!



CAN'T IT WAIT TILL MORNING, BEET? :

WHY... SURE... MONEY!



DARLING? I'M RID OF HIM AT LAST.

IT'S GONNA BE SMOOTH SAILING FROM NOW ON, BABY!



BUT THE NEXT DAY, THINGS DID NOT GO AS SMOOTHLY AS THEY HAD PLANNED! DERT AND FLO COULD NOT FIND A TRACE OF THE MONEY...

YOU SAY HE KEPT IT HERE IN THE LIGHT-HOUSE?

YES! YES! HE KEPT IT SOMEWHERE IN THIS PLACE! KEEP LOOKING...



AND LOOK THEY DID! FOR ALMOST TWO WEEKS THEY SEARCHED! THEY COVERED THE LIGHTHOUSE WITH A FINE-TOOTHED COMB... EVERY INCH... BUT NO MONEY!

IT'S GOT TO BE HERE... IT'S GOT TO!

WHERE... WHERE IF HE DIDN'T KEEP IT HERE... MAYBE HE HAD IT OUTSIDE... THE STOREHOUSE... OR THE BOAT SHED...



I'LL GO DOWN TO THE BEACH TO THE SHED, BERT! YOU TRY THE STOREHOUSE! DON'T WORRY! WE'LL FIND IT!



CAUTIOUSLY, FLO MADE HER WAY DOWN THE STAIRS TO THE BEACH...

I DON'T THINK HANK WOULD HAVE KEPT HIS MONEY DOWN HERE! IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SAFE...



SLOWLY SHE LOOSED THE DOORS NEAR THE SHED...

A HIGH SEA COULD TAKE THIS SHED... AND... AND... GASP...



E-E-E-A-A-A-H!

FLO! FLO... WHAT IS IT?



IT... IT'S HANK MY HUSBAND! HE'S... HE'S COME BACK! HE'S COME BACK FROM THE SEA...

BERT RUSHED TO THE NOSE OF THE HORRIFIED FLORENCE.

OH, BERT! IT'S HORRIBLE!

DON'T LOOK AT HIM, FLO! HE'S HARDLY RECOGNIZABLE... AFTER TWO WEEKS IN THE WATER...



WHAT WILL WE DO, BERT? WE CAN'T REPORT THAT HIS BODY WASHED AWAY BE *HERE*? IT'S TOO MUCH OF A COINCIDENCE?

WE'VE GOT TO PUT HIM BACK, FLO... BACK INTO THE SEA...



FIGHTING THE MALEVA THAT SWIFT OVER THEM, THE TWO PEOPLE LIFTED THE CORPSE AND CARRIED IT TO THE CAR.

WE'LL DRIVE OVER TO WARNER'S POINT AND THROW IT OFF! THAT'S FAR ENOUGH AWAY! THE CURRENT'S SUFFICIENT TO CARRY HIM OFF THE COAST FROM *THERE*...

YES... VERY



IN THE GLASS OF THE NIGHT, THEY DROVE TO A SPOT HIGH OVER THE ROARING SEA... WARNER'S POINT... AND PLUNGED THE REMAINS OF THE MURDERED HANK OFF THE CLIFF.

ONE... TWO... *THREE*! THAT'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM.

BERT? I FEEL SICK! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!



IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, FLO LISTENED CAREFULLY TO EACH MAJOR NEWS REPORT...

NO NEWS! NOT A WORD ABOUT ANYONE FINDING A BODY

DON'T WORRY, FLO! IT'LL TURN UP...



BUT HANK'S BODY *DIEN'T* TURN UP... AND THEN, ONE DAY...

I CAN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER! THIS WAITING IS DRIVING ME *WUTS*!

BERT? WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THE DINNER OUT AND DO A LITTLE FISHING—IT'LL CALM YOUR NERVES!



BERT MADE HIS WAY DOWN THE STEPS FROM THE LIGHT-HOUSE TO THE BEACH... FISHING BOUNDED LIKE A GOOD IDEA...

I'LL GIVE ME SOME CLAMS FOR HIM! I BAWNTA GET A MESS OF PERCHES THIS TIME OF... *NO?*

NO! NO!





FLO! COME QUICKLY!



WHAT IS IT, BERT? WHAT... WHO... OH... NO! IT CAN'T BE!

IT'S ADM. FLOYD! COME BACK AGAIN! WE CAN'T GET HIM UP HERE!



IT'S BRASS! HE... HE'S ALL... ROTTEN!

DON'T LOOK AT HIM, FLO! THE FISH AND CRABS HAVE MADE HIM HORRIBLE!



WHAT WILL WE DO WITH HIM **2005** TIME, BERT? WHY DON'T WE PHONE THE POLICE AND...

NO, WE CAN'T! IF HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE OUT ON A FISHING TRIP, IT'D BE A STRANGE COINCIDENCE THAT HIS BODY WASHED UP HERE... BACK HOME!



WELL, IT'S STRANGE! YOU'VE GOT TO MAKE SURE SOMEONE FINDS HIM **GOOD** TIME!

I KNOW! I'LL DIVE UP-**COAST** TO FALMOUTH AND INSTEAD OF THROWING HIS BODY INTO THE SEA...



...I'LL LEAVE IT RIGHT ON THE BEACH... AS IF IT WAS WASHED UP THERE! THEN SOMEONE'S **GOING** TO FIND IT!

THAT'S A GOOD IDEA, BERT!



AND SO, THAT NIGHT, BERT DROVE TO FALMOUTH, TWENTY MILES NORTH OF THEIR DERELICT LIGHT-HOUSE... AND LEFT THE BODY ON THE BEACH!

THERE! SOMEONE'LL FIND IT, GOME NOBING!

BUT THE DAYS PASSES... AND NO WORD COMES! FUD LISTENS TO EVERY NEWS BROADCAST, BUT THERE WAS NO MENTION OF FINDING HANK'S BODY!

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HIM, BERT? WHY HAVEN'T THEY FOUND HIM... YET?

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, FUD! I LEFT HIM RIGHT ON THE FALMOUTH BEACH? FOLKS MUST PASS THERE.



THEY'LL FIND HIM, SOMM! O'WIGHT! LET'S LOOK FOR THE MONEY! AGAIN!

THE MONEY! THE MONEY! THAT'S ALL YOU THINK OF? DOESN'T IT SEEMER YOU THAT HANK'S BODY KE-IT COME BACK FROM THE SEA? DOESN'T IT SEEMER YOU THAT THEY STILL HAVEN'T FOUND HIM?



SURE! SURE! IT BOTHERS ME! WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT!

DRIVE UP TO FALMOUTH AGAIN! SEE IF HIS CORPSE STAYS ON THAT BEACH!



CRAZY! IF YOU WANT ME TO! I'LL DO SOMY! I'LL MAKE IT BY MID-NIGHT AND I CAN BE BACK BY TWO A.M!

I'LL WAIT UP FOR YOU!



BERT LEFT THE FURNISHED FLORENCE AND STAYED OUT FOR FALMOUTH! THE MOONLIGHT DRABBED BY... AND THE CLOCK CRACKED ELEVEM! OUTSIDE, IN THE BLACK NIGHT, THE SOUND OF THE ROARING SEA POUNDING THE ROCKS SHATTERED THE DARKNESS!

I KNEW, WHEN BERT FIRST CAME TO THE LIGHT... TO WORK FOR HANK.



I REMEM, THEN, THAT NOTHIN' GOOD WOULD COME OF HIM AN' ME! AND YET... I COULD NOT HELP MYSELF! I WAS CRAZY! WITH LOVELESSNESS! HANK AN' ME, ALONE HERE FOR TWO YEARS! SEEM' NO ONE! MEYER TAKIN' ME ANYWHERE! I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF! WHEN BERT CAME I FELL IN LOVE WITH HIM.



AND NOW WE'VE MURDERED HANK! AND WE THROW HIM TO THE SEA, BUT THE SEA KEEPS GVIN' HIM BACK. TO... BERT! WHAT'S THAT? LOOKS LIKE SEAWATER, COMIN' IN FROM UNDER THE DOOR!

IT'S HANK! HE'S OUTSIDE THAT DOOR! COME TO GET ME!



THE TERRIFIED FLORENCE BACKED AWAY FROM THE DOOR... BACK... BACK TO THE SPIRAL STAIRCASE THAT LED TO THE TOP OF THE LIGHTHOUSE!

HE'S RATTLIN' THE KNOB! HE'S GOING TO COME AF AND...



SLOWLY SHE BACKS UP THE STAIRCASE...

THE DOOR... HE'S OPENED THE DOOR! I CAN HEAR HIM... COMIN' ACROSS THE BETTIN' ROOM? COMIN'... TO THE STAIRS...



HE'S ON THE STAIRS NOW! I CAN HEAR HIS FOOTSTEPS... COMIN' UP... COMIN' UP AFTER ME!



SUDDENLY, FLORENCE FOUND HERSELF AT THE TOP OF THE LIGHTHOUSE... NO PLACE TO GO... DAMNIT... LIKE A RAT IN A TRAP...



I'M CORNERED! I CAN'T... HIDE! THE LIGHT! I'LL... TURN IT OFF UNLESS HE WON'T SEE ME!

HE'S COMIN' CLOSER! HE'S REACHIN' THE TOP OF THE STAIRS! HE'LL BE HERE... SOON... HE HE'S... COMIN'... COMIN'... I... I...



A FEW MINUTES LATER, A CAR DROVE UP! IT WAS BENT!



H-H-H-M! THAT'S STRANGE! THE LIGHT IS OUT!

FLD? THE LAMP'S OUT? YEAH, YEAH... SHE ISN'T HERE! WHAT'S THIS ON THE FLOOR? LOOKS LIKE SEA WATER!



LEADS UP TO THE LIGHT? I'LL MUST BE TRYIN' TO FIGHT! I'LL GO UP AND HELP HER!



SHE'S GOING TO BE ANGRY WHEN I TELL HER ABOUT HANK'S BODY BEIN' GONE FROM PALMOUTH BEACH? THAT IT MUSTA BEEN LOW TIDE WHEN I PUT IT THERE... AND IT PROBABLY GOT WASHED OUT TO SEA AGAIN.



A-A-A-G-H-H!



AND THE NEXT MORNING... WHEN THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTORS CAME TO INVESTIGATE WHY THE LIGHT HAD GONE OUT...

NOT A HANK ON 'EM? I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! WHAT'S THAT STUFF ALL AROUND? LOOKS LIKE ~~JUNK~~!



SAY, FRED? WHAT'S THAT DOWN ON THE BEACH?

LOOKS LIKE ~~JUNK~~ STUFF! LET'S GO DOWN AND HAVE A LOOK.



AND THAT'S THE STORY, DEAR READER! OR WHAT DO YOU THINK HAPPENED UP THERE AT THE TOP OF THAT LIGHT HOUSE? DID HANK ~~ROCK~~? COME BACK OR WAS IT JUST BERT AND FLD'S IMAGINATION? CERTAINLY, HIS CORPSE WAS PERSISTENT. WASN'T IT? BUT THEN... HEH, HEH... I ALWAYS TELL ABOUT CADAVERS THAT REFUSE TO STAY BURIED WHETHER IN SOIL OR SEA! OH, BY THE WAY, IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN THAT BIRD DO, THEY FOUND IT... IN A MONSTER-BELT ON HANK'S BODY? IT WAS ALL WATER-LOGGED AND ROPED... HEH, HEH... JUST LIKE POOR HANK!



AND DON'T FORGET... WRITE TO ME IF YOU LIKE BY TALKIN' ADDRESS YOUR LETTER TO:
THE VULT-KEEPER

WHAT IS THE TERROR SURROUNDING THIS ONCE SPLENDID HOME?
WHY DO THE VERY WALLS SHAKE AS IF FROM SOME IMPENDING DISASTER?
WHO ARE THE SHADOWY DWELLERS LIVING HERE UNDER THE SPELL OF

The curse of **HARKLEY HEATH**

ANOTHER SUSPENSE STORY
OF THE VAULT OF
HORROR!

"JUNE, 1820... I, CLAYTON HARKLEY,
DYING FROM THE MORTAL WOUNDS
INFLECTED BY MY VILLAINOUS
BROTHER, CAN DO NOTHING TO
PREVENT MY WEALTH FROM FALL-
ING INTO HIS POSSESSION

"THIS IS 'HARKLEY HEATH'! ONCE A PRIDE MANSION, NOW
CRUMBLING AND DECAYED, ROTTING ON THE ENGLISH MOOR...
AND THE DISREPUTATION WHICH BEFELS THIS ACCURSED
DWELLING OF DOOM IS SHARED BY THE LAST MEMBERS OF
THE HARKLEY CLANT!"

"BUT THIS FORTUNE PASSES FROM MY GODDAMN HARKLEY WITH
A MOST HORRIBLE CURSE UPON IT! MAY THIS WEALTH CORRUPT
A NO-INFEEST EACH SUCCEEDING GENERATION, UNTIL THIS
HERITAGE OF HATE AND MURDER SHALL BLOT OUT THE
FAMILY AND THE WORLD SHALL KNOW NO MORE OF THE VILE
HARKLEY BLOOD! *REGURNS DAT IN PAGE!*"

WANT!
ALL LIST!
FOOLISH?



HOW CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT STUFF? OLD FAMILY QUIBBS. BAH! THE MONEY IS GONE. NOW, AND NO ONE CAN TAKE IT AWAY! WE ARE THE LAST OF THE HARKLEYS!



S-BUT, COULD GRAPPLES, SUPPOSE SOMEONE FINDS OUT THAT WE ASSAULTED UNCLE ROGER?

NEVER SAY THAT AGAIN, COULD BEBBA! FORGET IT EVER HAPPENED! AND STOP THAT WHINING! I TELL YOU WE'RE JUDY AND NOTHING CAN...



RAP RAP RAP



GOOD EVENING, SHIFF. I'M ER... MR. HASKER, YOUR BEAR DEPARTED UNCLE'S LAWYER! ER... MAY I, SHIFF, COME IN?



IT'S MISS SYBIL HARKLEY I WANTED TO SEE, IF YOU DON'T MIND!

YES, YES, RIGHT HERE!



I KNOW THAT THIS IS AN HOUR OF MUCH SORROW FOR YOU, BUT IT'S MY DUTY TO INFORM YOU OF YOUR UNCLE'S WILL!

HIS... HIS WILL?



YES, YOUR UNCLE HAS SPOOLED THAT ALL OF HIS WEALTH SHALL GO TO... MISS SYBIL!



I... I'M SO SURPRISED, MR. HASKER! I... THE SHOCK!

I UNDERSTAND, MY DEAR! I'LL LEAVE YOU THEN, AND I WILL SEE YOU IN MY OFFICE SOMETIME NEXT WEEK?



DON'T LOOK AT ME THAT WAY! I DIDN'T KNOW I SWORN I DIDN'T KNOW HE HAD A WILL! BUT... SOMETHING HAS CHANGED! I'LL SHARE THE MONEY WITH YOU! YOU ASK? BELIEVE ME!

OF COURSE, COUSIN SYLL! OF COURSE! NOW YOU'D BETTER GO RIGHT TO BED AND REST!



THE GANGLI TREMBLING IN SYLL'S HAND THREE UNRECOGNIZABLE SHAPES OF HORROR ON THE CRACKED WALLS! SHE FEARFULLY MOUNTED THE STAIRS KNOWING THAT THIS MIGHT BE HER LAST NIGHT ALIVE.

THEY DON'T BELIEVE ME! I CAN SEE IT IN THEIR EYES! THEY'LL MURDER ME!



BUT... BUT CAN WE REST IT?

WE ASK? COME NOW, COUSIN EDGAR, YOU'VE MURDERED ONCE ALREADY! THERE'S NO TURNING BACK, NOW!



WITH SOME OF THIS NIGHTMARE UNCLE ROGER USED IN THE LAST DAYS OF HIS DEATH, WE CAN...

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT, COUSIN CHARLES, AS USUAL! BUT WE MUST DO IT QUICKLY! TONIGHT... WHILE SHE'S ASLEEP!



AND WHILE THE VILLANOUS COUSINS PLANNED THEIR MURDEROUS DEED, SYLL LAY WAITING FOR THE FINAL FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE HER DOOR...

HE KNOWS THEY'RE COMING TO GET ME! BUT THEY DON'T KNOW I HAVE THIS!



I'LL GO IN FIRST! WHEN I GRAB HER, YOU GET THAT NEEDLE READY.

I HATE TO DO THIS TO DEAR COUSIN SYLL, BUT...



SHE'S... SHE'S GONE? WHERE... WHAT...



NEVER! I AM, COUGH CHARLES! DID YOU THINK YOU COULD TAKE ME SO EASILY? YOU'RE A FOOL, CHARLES. A MORTALFOUS FOOL!



LET GO! LET GO! AAAAHHH!

CHARLES, HELP ME! I'VE GOT HER!

BANG!



NOW THE NEEDLE, EDGAR! QUICKLY! OH! THIS WILL KEEP YOU QUIET. MY DEAR COUGH PERMANENTLY QUIET! THAT MONEY WILL BE MINE!



YOU SWINE! YOU ONLY SWINE! YOU... COUGH... MAY KILL ME... BUT YOU CAN'T KILL THE HARBLEY COUGH! I'LL... I'LL COME BACK FROM THE GRAVE! COUGH... YOU SHOAN'T GET THAT MONEY! 1-800-304!



IS SHE... IS SHE DEAD, COUGH CHARLES?

OF COURSE SHE'S DEAD. YOU ISHT? NO ONE COULD LIVE WITH THAT MORPHINE IN THEM! IT WAS SO EASY. WASHIT IT, COUGH EDGAR? HAH, HAH, HAH!



DOWN... DOWN THROUGH THE ECHOING, MUSTY HALLS! DOWN TO THE BUTTERBANKIAN HALLS, WHERE THE HARBLEY FAMILY BURIED THEIR DEAD.

TOMORROW WE'LL CARRY HER OUT TO THE MOOR!

YES, POOR STEVE! WHEN SHE'S FOUND, EVERYONE WILL BELIEVE SHE WENT MAD AFTER UNCLE ROGER'S DEATH!



AND THEN THE MONEY...IT'S ALL GONE! MINE AND FORGOT!

WHY... WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME... AD? CHARLES? DON'T DOO? THINK THAT!

FOR ONE HORRIBLE MOMENT THE COURSE STAYED AT EACH OTHER'S! THE MURDEROUS GLEAM IN CHARLES' EYE TOLD EDGART THE TERRIBLE TRUTH! IT WAS THE SAME LOOK SYDNEE HAD BEEN BEFORE HER DEATH!

"NEVER!" COUSIN CHARLES WOULD STOP AT NOTHING FOR THAT MONEY! HE'D EVEN KILL ME FOR IT!

THE COURAGEFUL FOOL! HE'S THE ONLY ONE IN MY WAY, BUT I'LL FIND THAT!



"I DON'T LIVE IT, COUSIN CHARLES? I DON'T BREATHE HER IN THIS HOUSE!"

"YOU'RE NOT REALLY AFRAID OF HER, ARE YOU, EDGART?"



"THIS HOUSE... I CAN FEEL HER EVERYWHERE! SHE'S... SHE'S HAUNTING US! WE'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH IT, CHARLES!"

"STOP FREAKING, EDGART! SHE'S DEAD... AND BURNED! SHEETS... ~~NO!~~"



"BUT... I CAN HEAR HER! SHE'S COMING TO GET US! THAT HAUSE DON'T YOU HEAR IT?"

"STOP BABELING, YOU WRETCH! THE WIND IS HANGING THE SHUTTERS! IT'S JUST THE STORM!"



"BUT, CHARLES! CHARLES? IT MAY BE THE CURSE!"

"HA, HA, HA! YOU'RE AFRAID OF A DEAD WOMAN? YOU FOOL! IT'S ME YOU SHOULD BE AFRAID OF! GET!"



CHARLES NO!

"YOU DAVELING COYARD? YOU DON'T DESERVE THAT MONEY!"



"YOU... BEEP... YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME! SHE'LL GET YOU, TOO!"

"YOU WON'T GET AWAY FROM ME!"







LIE A LIVING BEAST, THE FIRE RAN THROUGH THE ANCIENT TIMBERS, CONSUMING, DESTROYING! THE BLAZENED RUMS MISSED QUIETLY IN THE LIGHT RAIN, NOTHING MOVED ON THE DREARY MOON! THE ANCIENT BURGE OF HARTLEY HEATH HAD REACHED IT'S DESTINY! HOUSE AND FAMILY HAD BE RETURNED TO THE EARTH FROM WHERE THEY CAME...

THE DIAMOND OF DEATH!

The glitter of the huge diamond in Crandall's upturned palm almost blinded him. Even in the darkened room, its brilliance was enough to illuminate the sharp contours of his crazy face. His eyes were wide with a joy he had never felt before — his thin lips quivered with anticipation and triumph! He had found it — after years as Butler here in the house of Silas Morgan, he had at last uncovered the secret hiding place of the fabulous Diamond of Death!

Suddenly the door behind him swung open and Crandall whirled in surprise. The old man himself! Silas Morgan leaning on his cane . . . came slowly into the room, his eyes focused on the glistering gem still held in Crandall's palm.

"T-You've found it," Morgan stammered, his own eyes growing wide as they contemplated the priceless diamond. "P-Put it back . . . it will never bring anything but tragedy to you, you fool! Put it back before it casts its spell over YOU, as it has over every one who has possessed it!"

Crandall's hat closed tighter over the sharp-edged stone, and he strained to remember the legend that had grown around the gem he had found at last. What were the stone's peculiar . . . almost supernatural . . . powers supposed to be? Oh, yes . . . that non-

sense about it causing its owner to vanish from the Earth without a trace! Pure BUNK!

The old man lunged at him in that instant and Crandall stepped aside quickly, his foot shooting out in time to send Morgan crashing headlong to the floor. So the owner of the Diamond of Death was supposed to disappear without a trace, he thought to himself, solving Morgan's case and smacking it against the old man's skull! Well . . . he would make certain that Morgan, its last owner DID vanish forever!

Crandall slammed the barn-door shut and left the cellar, his giggle turning to a roar of laughter. Old Morgan was gone . . . no trace of the man who collected valuable gems and tropical plants would EVER be found after the flames had done their work! With satisfaction he left the huge diamond in his palm as he entered the plant room to look around for the last time. His gaze darted from one color-speckled leaf to another . . . never again would he have to tend these monsters of the jungle!

Something rubbery grazed the back of his neck and he whirled with surprise. The thing that Morgan had called the "Man-Eater" was reaching its long green tentacles toward him! Desperately he tried to step away from the grasping leaf . . . but a sinuous arm enveloped him and dragged him inexorably toward the plant's gaping mouth! Crandall struggled . . . a scream stilled from his lips . . . but he was held fast and drawn closer and closer to that yawning mouth! He tried to squirm free . . . to scratch and bite his way free . . . but his head was being enveloped in that stifling foliage that wouldn't permit him to fight back . . .

The movement inside the swollen bud of the "Man-Eater" stopped . . . all was quiet in the room. And then something appeared on the lips of the plant . . . trembled there for an instant . . . fell quickly to the floor. The room was once again swathed in quiet and darkness . . . except for the Diamond of Death glimmering at the foot of the Man-Eater plant!



IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, WHEN ALFRED LEMONET WAS ANATOMY INSTRUCTOR AT THE SURGEONS' SCHOOL OF HAMPSHIRE, IT WAS THE STRANGE BUT UNIVERSALLY-ACCEPTED CUSTOM FOR PROFESSORS TO PROVIDE THE CADAVERS USED BY THEIR PUPILS FOR EXPERIMENTATION! OUT OF THIS FACT... AND A MAD DESIRE TO KEEP HIS JOB AT ALL COSTS... CAME LEMONET'S GRUESOME REPUTATION AS

DOCTOR OF HORROR

THESE BODIES MAKE YOU THE MOST SOUGHT-AFTER INSTRUCTOR IN THE WHOLE ANATOMY SECTION, LEMONET! WHERE DO YOU GET THEM ALL?

YOU'VE ABOUT TO FIND OUT, DOCTOR!

ANOTHER SUSPENSE STORY
THE VAULT OF HORROR!

YOU KNOW PERFECTLY WELL NOW, LEMONET... HOW DIFFICULT FOR YOUR PUPILS TO EXPERIMENT WITH! IT'S BEEN THE CUSTOM FOR PROFESSORS TO PROVIDE THE CADAVERS USED IN THEIR CLASSROOMS FOR CENTURIES... YOU'LL HAVE TO GET THEM SOMEBODY!

Y-YES... I'LL WILL...

IN THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF HAMPSHIRE'S SURGEONS' SCHOOL... A FURIOUS CONVERSATION TOOK PLACE ONE DAY....

...AND ATTENDANCE AT HIS CLASSES IS FALLING OFF, LEMONET! IF YOU WANT TO STAY HERE AS A TEACHER IN ANATOMY... YOU'VE GOT TO GET MORE PUPILS!

B-BUT NOW, DOCTOR FINCH?



I CAN'T LOSE THIS POSITION HERE AT GARRON'S SCHOOL... I'VE GOT TO HOLD ON TO IT AT ALL COSTS! I-- I'LL GET BOOKS FOR MY CLASSES-- NO MATTER WHAT I HAVE TO DO TO GET THEM!



DRIVEN ONLY THE FEAR OF LOSING HIS POSITION, MEER DOCTOR ALFRED LEMONET WRACKED HIS BRAINS FOR A PLAN TO SUPPLY HIS PUPILS WITH DAGGERS! AND SUDDENLY...

WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN! WHILE I'VE SEARCHED ABOUT WILDLY FOR DEAD MEN TO GIVE TO MY PUPILS THERE'S BEEN A MAGNIFICENT SUPPLY RIGHT UNDER MY VERY NOSE! THIS COLUMN OF *RAVENS* IS THE ANSWER!



THIS MAN... JOHN FARROW DIED YESTERDAY, AND WAS BURIED JUST THIS MORNING ON SPANISH HILL! THERE'S NO ONE ABOUT TO SEE ME TAKE THE BODY... IF I WORK QUICKLY AND SILENTLY!



THIS IS THE ONE! JUST FRESH ENOUGH TO EXPERIMENT ON... AND NO ONE NEEDS EVER KNOW HOW I GOT IT! LET THE OTHER INSTRUCTORS BID AGAINST ONE ANOTHER FOR THE BODIES OF CRIMINALS-- I'LL GET MY OWN SUPPLY!



ALFRED LEMONET, FEAR AND MEER AS HE WAS, NEVERTHELESS WAS CAPABLE OF MODERN AND CLASSIC TALENTS WHEN IT CAME TO PROTECTING HIS JOB. HE OVERSIGHTED NO MIGHT! AND SO, THROUGH THE LONG HOURS OF THE NIGHT, HIS SHOVEL FLEW PROUDLY!



I... I'VE STRUCK THE *COFFIN*! NOT MUCH LONGER...

ALFRED LEMONET, DID CONTINUE IN HIS JOB! AND AS TIME WENT ON, AND HIS SUPPLY OF DAGGERS FAILED TO DIMINISH, HE BEGAN TO ATTRACT PUPILS FROM ALL PARTS OF HANPORE...

AAAH! PERFECT... NOT A BRUISE, NOT A MARK! IT SHOULD BE GOOD FOR AT LEAST *FEW* PUPILS! FINCH WILL HATE TO LET ME CONTINUE FOR A LITTLE WHILE, ANYWAY!



MY CLASSES ARE THE LARGEST IN THE WHOLE SCHOOL... AND ALL BECAUSE I'VE BEEN CLEVER ENOUGH TO GET MORE BOOKS THAN ANY OTHER TEACHER! AT LAST I CAN BREATHE EASY ABOUT HOLDING THIS POSITION!



LEMNETT'S JOB **WAS** SECURE, BUT AFTER A TIME HIS AMBITION BEGAN TO ASSERT ITSELF AS HE HEARD THE OTHER TEACHERS REFER TO HIM AS A LEADING PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY.

MUST I SPEND MY WHOLE LIFE COoped UP HERE IN THE SURGEONS' SCHOOL? THERE MUST BE A MORE IMPORTANT JOB FOR A MAN OF MY TALENTS! IF I COULD ONLY FIND...



SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL COLLEGE ARE COMING HERE TOMORROW... THE REASON FOR THEIR VISIT IS TO SELECT A SUCCESSOR FOR **ME**! I HAVE BEEN CHOSEN GOVERNOR OF THE ENTIRE MEDICAL SCHOOL HERE... AND THE POSITION OF DEAN WILL BE OPEN! THE CHOICE LIES BETWEEN YOU AND MR CRANSHAW... AND AT THE PRESENT TIME, CRANSHAW IS FIRST IN LINE FOR THE JOB!



IMAGINE HOW YOUR POPULARITY HAS GROWN, LEMNETT... AND THE NUMBER OF CADAVERS YOU'RE ABLE TO PROVIDE.



W--WHO...? **CRANSHAW!**
Y--YOU TOOK ME BY SURPRISE!

W--WHAT...? OH... DOCTOR FINCH? WHAT BRINGS YOU TO **MY** HUMBLE ROOM...?



URGENT BUSINESS, LEMNETT... AND PERHAPS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR **YOU**! I WANT YOU TO LISTEN CAREFULLY TO ME... YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY A MAN WHO HAS TO BE TOLD SOMETHING ONLY **ONCE**!

BUT YOU STILL HAVE A CHANCE... IF YOU CAN CONVINCE THE INSPECTORS THAT YOU'RE A BETTER MAN THAN CRANSHAW! I SUGGEST YOU PREPARE A CLASS IN CADAVER DISSECTION FOR TOMORROW... AND MAKE IT THE NEXT LESSON OF YOUR COURSE... IF YOU WANT THAT JOB!



Y--YES, DR FINCH...
I--I'LL DO MY BEST!

CRANSHAW IS AHEAD OF ME FOR THAT JOB! IT'S WHAT I'VE ALWAYS WANTED... DEAN OF HAMPSHIRE SURGEONS' SCHOOL! TO DO **ANYTHING** TO GET HIM OUT OF THE WAY...



YOU'VE GOT THE REST OF THE TEACHERS TALKING ABOUT YOUR SUCCESS IN GETTING BONES FOR YOUR LECTURES! WHAT'S YOUR SAFELY GUARDED SECRET, LEMNETT... WHERE DO YOU GET THEM ALL?



Y--YOU'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT, DR CRANSHAW!

Y-YOU'RE MAD, LEMOINET? H-NO...

WAS DR. CRASHMAN JUST INTENT ON GETTING THAT JOB? AND NOTHING... AND GME'S GOING TO STAND IN MY WAY?



THAT LESSON FOR THE INSPECTOR OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL COLLEGE... IT W'LL BE THE PINEST OF MY CAREER, JUST AS FINCH SUGGESTED! AND DRASHMAN IS GOING TO HELP ME GET THE JOB OF DEAN... BY SERVING AS THE CARAVEN MY PEOPLE WILL EXPERIMENT ON!



THROUGH THE LONG HOURS OF THAT NIGHT ALFRED LEMOINET TOILED AT HIS GRUESOME TASK... GIGGILING THE FACE OF DR. CRASHMAN SO THAT IT WAS UNRECOGNIZABLE! AND HIS LESSON WAS A SUCCESS...

LET ME BE THE FIRST TO CONGRATULATE YOU, LEMOINET... EFFECTIVE ON THE FIRST OF THE MONTH YOU ARE THE NEW DEAN! CRASHMAN'S SUDDEN DISAPPEARANCE WAS AN UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT... BUT IT SERVED ONLY TO CLEAR THE WAY FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT!



THE MONTHS WENT BY UNEVENTFULLY AND AT LAST BECAME AS THE DEAN OF THE SURGEONS' SCHOOL, ALFRED LEMOINET'S AMBITIONS ONCE AGAIN CAME TO LIFE...



FINCH... NOTHING BECAUSE OF ALL-HEALTH FROM THE POST THEY GAVE HIM? THEY'LL BE LOOKING FOR A SUCCESSOR AS GOVERNOR OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL... I MUST GET THE JOB! IT MEANS AS MUCH AS LIFE ITSELF TO ME!



KNOWING HIS CUSTOMARY CAUTION AND CAREFULNESS TO THE BOND, ALFRED LEMOINET JOURNEYED TO THE OFFICE OF THE ROYAL SURGEON IN ORDER TO PLEAD HIS CASE FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE POST FELLOWSHIPED BY DEAN FINCH! FINALLY HE EMERGED, A CURIOUS GLEAM IN HIS EYES!

HE WILL CONSIDER ME IF I CAN PROVE THAT THE SCHOOL HAS PROGRESSED SINCE I BECAME DEAN! AN INSPECTION WILL BE MADE OF CLASSES TOMORROW... I MUST HURRY!



I MUST FURNISH CARAVENS FOR EVERY CLASS IN SCHOOL BY TOMORROW NIGHT... HEE, FEAR COUPERS! AND GRAVE-DIGGING IS OUT OF THE QUESTION THIS TIME! IT'S AN EMERGENCY THAT CALLS FOR MORE DRASTIC MEASURES! AHA... JUST THE SORT OF PLACE I WANT!



YOU HANG FOR ME, DOCTOR LEMOINET?


SOMETHING URGENT HAS COME UP, HAWKINS... I'LL BE GONE FOR SEVERAL HOURS! IF YOU HAVE TO CONTACT ME... I'LL BE IN CONFERENCE WITH THE ROYAL SURGEON!





I HEARD TELL THAT I CAN FIND A HANDFUL OF RASCAL MEN HERE WHO ARE ANXIOUS TO EARN A GOLD SOVEREIGN FOR A DAY'S WORK! THE SORT OF WORK THAT WOULD BRINGTEN LESS COURAGEOUS MEN! IS THERE ANYONE INTERESTED?

FOR A GOLD SOVEREIGN? SPEAK YOURS FREE, GUY! NOW WE'VE ALL EARS!



FOR THE FIRST FIFTEEN BOOKS DELIVERED TO THE HAMPSHIRE SURFACON SCHOOL TOMORROW... I PAY A SOVEREIGN APiece! BUT THE CORPSES MUST BE OF AN RECENTLY DECEASED SCOTLEMAN AND THEY MUST BE PROURED ONLY FROM THE BEST WATERFRONT NEIGHBOORHOOD? AGREED?

T-YA! YOU'VE GOT A DEAL, MISTER!



ALFRED LEMMET WAS DELIGHTED WITH THE SCHEME WHICH WOULD PROMOTE IN HIS PROMOTION TO THE GOVERNORSHIP OF THE ENTIRE HAMPSHIRE MEDICAL SCHOOL... AND IF INDEED PEOPLE WERE HART WITH HIS MAD AMBITION... THAT WAS THE COURSE OF HISTORY, HE TOLD HANDEL!



I MUST MAKE SOME PREPARATIONS FOR THE INSPECTION BY THE ROYAL SURFACON THIS EVENING, HAWKING! YOU STAND BY HERE...



A HUNDRED OF DECADES WILL ARRIVE IN THE COURSE OF THE EVENING... I WANT YOU TO PREPARE THEM FOR DISSECTION CLASSES! I HAVE TO OVERSEE THE EA AUTHORITIES TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT NOTHING GOES WRONG WITH THE PLANS FOR DELIVERY OF THE BOOKS! I'LL BE BACK AT SIX O'CLOCK!



HAWKING CAN BE RELIED UPON TO SUMMON THE PUPILS AND GET THE OBSERVERS READY FOR THE GREATEST EVENING OF MY LIFE! BUT THOSE KILLERS I HIRE... THEY MIGHT NEED A LITTLE PRODDING! I CAN'T HAVE THEM LADNESS INTERFERE WITH MY DANCE!



AH... HERE COME SEVERAL OF THE CUT-THROATS' INTENT ON THEIR BLOODY MISSION! I'LL JUST HIDE AND WATCH THEM CARRY OUT MY INSTRUCTIONS! ON THAT SUCCESS MIGHTY HANGS MY OWN FUTURE!



THE WHITES FLOODED BY AS ALFRED LEMMET SPARKED BEHIND HIS HIRED ASSASSINS! AND AS THEY COVERED STREET AFTER STREET WITHOUT MEETING A SINGLE PROSPECTIVE VICTIM LEMMET GREW FRANTIC.

AND YOU'RE! THIS BENTON IT'S HELPING EVER ONE INCOMP! YOU'LL HAVE TO GO INTO THE HOUSES... GRAB THE VICTIMS OUT.

A FEW MINUTES LATER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF THE HAMBURG SURGERY SCHOOL, A PAIR OF ANXIOUS EYES POKED THROUGH THE WINDOW TO THE STREET BELOW...



DOCTOR LEMONET WILL BE FURIOUS WITH ME! THOSE BODIES THAT WERE TO BE DELIVERED HERE BY SIX O'CLOCK FOR HIS EVENING'S CLASSES... THERE'S BEEN NO SIGN OF THEM!

AND THE DOCTOR HIMSELF... HE'S LATE, TOO! THIS IS A TERRIBLE PREDICAMENT, WITH THE ROYAL SURGEON COMING HERE HIMSELF TO MAKE THE INSPECTION... AND NOTHING IS READY!



THAT'S IT... PUT IT RIGHT THERE AND GET THOSE OTHER BODIES HERE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE! THERE'S NOT A MOMENT TO LOSE! IT'S ALMOST SIX O'CLOCK ALREADY!

IF WE'RE DOING THE BEST WE CAN HERE, AND IF SOMEONE HADN'T HELPED US, DID WE WOULDN'T EVEN HAVE GOTTEN THOSE ONE!



I SHOULD GO OUT TO SEARCH FOR THE DOCTOR AND TELL HIM THAT THE BODIES HAVEN'T ARRIVED YET... W-WHAT'S THAT? T-THE DOOR... STARTLES ME!



STOP TALKING... AND *SWIFT!* THE BODIES MUST BE PREPARED, AND I HAVE TO LOCATE DOCTOR LEMONET SOMEHOW IN THIS WEATHER... HE MAY BE LOST... OR MAY HAVE MET UP WITH SOME UNFORGEABLE ACCIDENT!



WE WERE TOLD TO BRING COFFERS HERE TO THE SCHOOL...

FOLLOW ME RIGHT TO THE ANATOMY ROOM... AND YOU'D BETTER HURRY WITH THE REST OF THE CASADORS! IF THE ROYAL SURGEON ARRIVES AND THERE AREN'T ENOUGH COFFERS... DOCTOR LEMONET WILL DIE OF HUMILIATION!



HURRY... WE CAN'T RISK NOW! EVERYTHING DOCTOR LEMONET HAS DONE IN THE PAST HAS BEEN JUST A PREPARATION FOR TODAY! WE MUST HELP HIM ACHIEVE THE REWARD HE DESERVED!

AND ON THAT STORMY NIGHT IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, DOCTOR ALFRED LEMONET *AND* RECEIVE THE REWARD HE SO EARLY DESERVED!



HIGH IN THE EMPTY SKY WE FLEW ALIC AND I IN A SMALL SILVER MONOPLANE STREAMING WEST ACROSS THE BROAD PACIFIC... THE PACIFIC A VAST GLITTERING EXPANSE SPREADING IN ALL DIRECTIONS TO THE HORIZONS!

LITTLE DID WE REALIZE, LOOKING DOWN ON A TINY ISLAND LYING BENEATH US ON THE SURFACE OF THE OCEAN, THAT THIS LITTLE JUNGLE ISLAND... THIS LONELY SPECK OF DIRT SHOULD IN THE FOLLOWING MOMENTS BRING US AS CLOSE TO HADES AS MORTAL MAN MIGHT COME!
AND SO LET US PROCEED FURTHER INTO MY TALE...
THE WEIRD TALE OF THE...

ISLAND of DEATH

DID YOU NOTICE THAT LITTLE ISLAND DOWN THERE, STEVE? I CAN'T FIND IT ON THE CHARTS!

ON YOUR TOES,
ALICE? THE MOTOR
DOESN'T SOUND
RIGHT!

THE FUEL PUMP
SEEMS TO BE
JAMMED! THE
MOTOR'S COOKING
OUT!

STEVE! STEVE!
WE'RE LOSING
ALTITUDE!

SPUT! SPUT!

ANOTHER SUSPENSE STORY
— THE VAULT OF
HORROR!

I'M GOING TO TRY AND PARACHUTE AS CLOSE TO THAT ISLAND AS POSSIBLE! BRACE YOURSELVES, ALEC... HERE GOES NOTHING!

STEVE? THERE'S NOTHING BUT CORAL REEFS AND CLIFFS SURROUNDING THAT ISLAND! STEVE? WE WON'T MAKE IT!



IN A MOMENT IT WAS OVER! THE PLANE WAS CRUMPLED ON THE CORAL AND I FOUND MYSELF ALONE...STUGGLING IN THE WATER WITH GREAT WAVES RUSHING OVER ME, HURLING THEMSELVES AGAINST THE REEF! NOW I MANAGED TO STAY ALIVE IN THAT TUMBLE... I'LL NEVER KNOW! IN ANY EVENT, I WAS SWEPT TO SHORE... WHERE I FELL EXHAUSTED!



ALEC? WHERE ARE YOU ALEC?



... (GASP)... MUST FIND HELP! (GASP)... MUST FIND ALEC!

SCOUTING THE ISLAND, I FOLLOWED THE BEACH, AND AS I CLIMBED AROUND ONE NARROW PENINSULA OF ROCK, IT CAME INTO VIEW, PERCHED ON THE HIGHEST, BLACKEST CRAG! IT WAS THEN THAT I GOT THE FIRST SENSATION OF THE HORROR THAT WAS YET TO COME...



...A CASTLE?



OPEN UP! SOMEONE! PLEASE! NEED HELP!

I POUNDED ON THE HEAVY WOODEN DOOR LIKE A MADMAN! BUT THE SHOCK OF THE FIRST HOUR WAS CATCHING UP WITH ME! I PASSED OUT JUST BEFORE THE DOOR SWUNG OPEN!



CARRY HIM IN, WULDER!

I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I REMAINED UNCONSCIOUS, BUT WHEN I CAME TO, I FOUND MY HOST HAD PROVIDED ME WITH A DRY, CLEAN SET OF CLOTHES AND A HOT BATH WAS WAITING FOR ME! I REFRESHED MYSELF AND WENT TO MEET MY BENEFCTOR.



MR? SO? YOU HAVE WANDERED AT LAST! I TRUST YOU FEEL BETTER, MR. CRANE!



YES, MR. STEPHEN CRANE? I FOUND YOUR NAME AMONG YOUR EFFECTS! PERMIT ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF! I AM COUNT ALVARO CABRERA. WE FOUND YOU UNCONSCIOUS IN FRONT OF THE DOOR! YOU HAVE BEEN ASLEEP ALONG TIME? COME! FIRST WE WILL EAT, THEN WE WILL TALK!

THE COUNT HAD A LAVISH MEAL PREPARED! THE FOOD WAS EXCELLENT! THE COUNT WAS THE PERFECT HOST, BUT SOMEBODY I COULD NOT ENJOY IT! THERE WAS AN EVEL OVERTONE TO THE WHOLE CASTLE AND IT IS TWO LONELY OCCUPANTS, COUNT ALVARO CABRERA AND HIS QUENT SERVANT, WILDO.



I TRUST EVERYTHING WAS TO YOUR LIKING, MR. CRANE? COME, LET US NOW RETIRE TO MY TROPHY ROOM! THERE WE SHALL TALK, AND I WILL TELL YOU ABOUT MYSELF!

THE COUNT HAD A FANTASTIC TROPHY ROOM THERE WAS A TROPHY OF EVERY CONCEIVABLE TYPE OF WILD ANIMAL... OTHER HANDS ON THE WALL OR STANDING ABOUT THE ROOM!



AS YOU CAN OBSERVE, I AM QUITE THE HUNTER!

I'VE HUNTED IN THE FURTHEST CORNERS OF THE WORLD! I'VE CLIMBED MOUNTAINS, BO THROAT COURSES, BUSHES! I'VE HANDED THE DEALS FOR SALMON, TUNA, KELLED WHALES! I'VE FACED THE CRABBERS PANDA IN INDIA, THE HORN-CRAZED CAPE GUFFYLLD, THE MAN-EATING RENGAL TIGER!



MY NERVES ARE LIKE TEMPERED STEEL. MY HANDS IS STEADY, MY AIM DEADLY! I HAVE FITTED MY STRENGTH AGAINST THE MOST TESTY OF BEASTS!



I'VE MATCHED WITS WITH THE CRAFTIEST OF ANIMALS, THAT IS... ALL BUT ONE! THERE IS ONE ANIMAL I HAVE STILL TO HUNT...



...YES, MR. GRAVE, I HAVE STILL TO
MICH WITH THE CRAFTIEST OF
ANIMALS... HOW DARING... *BOOM!*
AND SOON I'LL HAVE THAT
PLEASURE...



YOU'VE TWELVE HOURS, MR.
GRAVE... ALL RIGHT, TO RUN AND
HIDE IN THE JUNGLE... TO PRE-
PARE YOURSELF? I AM A SPORTS-
MAN, AND I WILL MEET YOU A
SPORTING CHANCE!



TOMORROW, WHEN THE SUN RISES,
I WILL MEET YOU DOWN IN THE
JUNGLE WITH A CROSS-BOW? THAT
WILL GIVE YOU A SPORTING CHANCE?
IT WILL BE YOUR WITS AGAINST
MINE!



HE WAS INSANE...
COMPLETELY
INSANE? I HAD
NO CHOICE, I
STUMBLED OUT
OF THAT MAD
NOISE AND
FLUNG INTO
THE FOREST? IT
WAS TOO INCRED-
IBLE TO BELIEVE!
I WAS GOING TO
BE HURRIED...
LIKE A BULLET!
AS THE JUNGLE
CLOSED ABOUT ME,
I CALMED DOWN
AND TOOK MY
REAR-END. I
WOULD HAVE TO
BE CALM... EVERY
MOMENT COUNTED!



WHAT DO I HAVE IN MY POCKETS?
CIGARETTE LIGHTER, HANKERCHIEF,
AND... WHAT LUCK... MY CLASP-KNIFE!

IT WAS GETTING DARK? I HAD TO WORK FAST? I
RAGED DOWN TO THE BEACH TO SEE IF THERE
WAS ANYTHING I COULD SNAKE FROM THE
LAND?



EVERYTHING WASHED
AWAY? THERE ARE
SOME BITS OF THE
ALUMINUM FODDLAGE,
AND A PIECE OF
CABLE!

I GATHERED AN ARMFUL OF STOUT BRANCHES, AND LAY
THEM IN A NEAP? I THEN FASHIONED A CRUDE GOODBY FROM
AN ALUMINUM SECTION. WITH MY CLASP-KNIFE, I CARVED
EACH BRANCH INTO A SHARP LETAL STAKE!



I'LL DIG THE
PIT RIGHT IN
THE CENTER
OF THIS
JUNGLE
TRAIL!

By SUN-UP,
MY PIT WAS DEEP!
MY HANDS WERE
BLEEDING AND
MY WHOLE BODY
ACED FROM
THE EXERTION!
I ERECTED THE
STAKES IN THE
FLOOR OF THE
PIT, AND THEN
I STARTED
CAMOUFLAGING
MY PITFALL!

SUN UP!
WHAT'S
THAT?
HOWDS?
HE'S
FOLLOWING
MY TRAIL,
WITH
HOWDS?



BAY-
UP!
BAY
UP!

BAY-UP



QUICKLY I DOUBLED BACK UP THE TRAIL. I TOOK OUT THE CABLE I HAD TIED ON THE BEACH. I THEN STEE TOWARD A PINE STRAND I HAD UNRAVELLED FROM THE CABLE, BEHIND THE TRAIL, THROAT HIGH!



I THEN RAN BACK ALONG THE TRAIL ... CAREFULLY AVOIDING MY PITFALL.



MULDER CAME RUNNING FULL-TILT DOWN THE TRAIL WITH THE DOGS DRAGGING HIM ALONG! HE NEVER SAW THE FINEST SLIT OF MY DEARLY STYLED BIRD WAITING FOR HIS THROAT!



MY WIRE HAD DONE ITS WORK! THE COUNT LEFT MULDER HANGING BY HIS THROAT. MULDER'S DEATH IMPLAINED CARREK'S LUST FOR THE HILL ... HE WAS LATE!



MY LAST TRICK WAS MY PITFALL, HIDDEN ON THE TRAIL UP AHEAD OF THE COUNT.



THE HOUNDS CHARGED RIGHT ON INTO THE PIT! BUT THE COUNT WAS THE DEVIL INCARNATE! HIS EYES WERE LIKE AN EAGLE'S! HE SPOTTED MY TRAP... JUST AS HE HAD SEEN MY STEEL WIRE! BUT TOO LATE TO STOP THE GOSS...



WOULD GOSS? TOO LATE TO SAVE THEM!

A PITFALL... WITH SHARP BRACKS! AWAY VERY GOOD! I WILL TRAVEL EASIER WITHOUT THESE STUMBLING BRAYING HOUNDS!

YI-KI
YIPE!



MY QUARRY IS CLEVERER THAN I EXPECTED! *GOSS!* IT MAKES THIS CHASE MUCH MORE EXCITING!



THE FOOL HAS BLUNDERED THROUGH THE FOREST! HE HAS LEFT A TRAIL OF BROKEN BLADES OF GRASS AND TWIGS!



I WATCHED FROGGLATED, AND TERROR SEIZED AT THE SAME TIME, AS THE COUNT, WITH UNGAING PRECISION FOLLOWED MY TRAIL DIRECTLY TOWARD MY HIDEY PLACE.



STRAIGHT AT ME HE CAME! I THINK HE SENSED HE WAS CLOSE TO THE HILL! HIS EYES WERE BRIGHT, AND HE STALKED ME LIKE A COBRA ABOUT TO STRIKE! I COULDN'T JUST LET THERE! I WAS BURSTING TO *BREAK AND RUN!*



--I
CHARGED
!!

WAS I HAVE FLUSHED MY PREY! HE CHARGES ME, I SIGHT BETWEEN HIS EYES...



THE NEXT FEW MOMENTS WERE FULL OF CONFUSION! SOMEONE FIRED A PISTOL OFF TO MY RIGHT! THE GUY NEVER GOT A CHANCE TO TRIGGER HIS CROSS-BOW! HE SLUSHED HIS SHOULDERS! AND STUMBLER OFF INTO THE JUNGLE!



ALSO, FOWNE ALMOST YOU ESCAPED FROM THE FLAME!



I WAS WISHED UP, AS AND ALL, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ISLAND! WHO IS THAT GUY? WHY DID HE WANT TO KILL YOU?

MY SHOULDER! I HAVE BEEN HIT! WHERE DID THAT OTHER GUY COME FROM? NOW I AM THE HUNTED AND THEY ARE THE HUNTERS!



MOTHER OF HEAVEN! I HAVE STUMBLER INTO A JUNGLE WASPS! REST! I MUST GET AWAY! AAAAHHH! THE HUN!



YAAHH! EEEYAA! YAAAHAAH!



WE HEARD HIM CRASHING AROUND IN THE WOODS AND THEN THERE WAS SILENCE! WHEN WE CAME UPON THE BODY, HIS FEATURES WERE SWOLLEN BEYOND RECOGNITION. HE HAD BEEN LITERALLY STUNG TO DEATH BY THE HATE WASPS!



WOW! WHAT A MESS! LOOK AT HIS CASTLE! WE CAN MAKE IT TO THE MAINLAND BY SUNDOWN!

COME ON! THERE MUST BE A BOAT AT HIS CASTLE! WE CAN MAKE IT TO THE MAINLAND BY SUNDOWN!

WE DID FIND A BOAT AND WE ESCAPED FROM THAT ISLAND OF HORRORS! THE LAST THING WE SAW, AS IT PASSED OUT OF VIEW, WAS THE MORGUE-BLACK CASTLE OF THE LATE GOVY ALVARO SANGRAL, PERCHED HIGH ON THE CLIFF.

FUNNY THING, ALSO... HE HUNTED THE FEROCEST JAWBALLS, BUT IT TOOK A LOWLY WASSET TO FOUSSER HIM OFF!

CAN'T WE GET ANY MORE SPEED OUT OF THIS THING? I WANT TO GET HOME!





**THE VAULT
KEEPER**

HORROR



THE VAULT OF

WORLD



HORROR

INTRODUCING A NEW TREND IN MAGAZINES

**ILLUSTRATED
SUSPENSE STORIES**
WE DARE YOU TO READ!

"GOOD LORD! THE
CASKET IS OPEN! HER BODY
IS BARE! ESCAPE! DO YOU HEAR
ME! WHAT SHALL I DO?
HAPPENED TO ME!"



THE VAULT OF HORROR!



NO, WE MEET AGAIN, DEAR READERS! WELCOME! WE COME! WE COME! ONCE MORE TO THE VAULT OF HORROR! FOR THE SEVENTH OF MAY WE BRING YOU "THE VAULT OF THE EMBRY OF HORROR" EACH ISSUE! I TELL YOU TALES FROM MY "BEST COLLECTION OF GUILTY BELIEF-BUILDING SPINE-TINGLING STORIES... TALES THAT I ASSURE YOU WILL MAKE YOUR BLOOD FREEZE IN YOUR VEINS AND THE HAIR ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK BRISTLE WITH HORROR! DON'T TALK, I CALL..."

THE DEAD WILL RETURN!

KILL HIM! KILL HIM! HE IS POISONING!
PUSH HIM OVERBOARD...

YES, BEAT...



THE BOAT WENT OVER THE SIDE OF THE SMALL CRAFT, AND LANE GOT OUT OF SIGHT.

IN A COUPLE OF DAYS, HE'LL BEASEN WASHING DOWN THE COAST ARMS.

LET'S GO BACK, BERT? I FEEL WORRIED.



THE MAN CALLED BERT TURNED THE BOAT AROUND AND SAID TO THE WOMAN BELOW THE TOWERING LIGHTHOUSE.

AND WHEN I GET SOME AND ASK YOU ABOUT HIM, YOU'LL TELL THEM HE'S AWAY ON A PRIVATE TRIP?

YES, BERT. I WANTED THEM?



THE WOMAN, FLORENCE, STRESSED HEAVILY FROM THE TOWER AS IT SHAPED THE BEND OF THE SHORE.

OH... WHEN THEY FIND HIS BODY THEY'LL THINK THAT HE DROWNED AT SEA... AND THEN... THEN YOU'LL BE FREE TO MARRY ME?

YES, BERT? AND HIS MONEY WE'LL HAVE HIS MONEY... OVER \$5,000? A FORTUNE?



THE TWO PEOPLE CLIMBED THE STEPS OF THE LIGHTHOUSE AND ENTERED.

TALKING ABOUT THAT MONEY, WERE YOU YOUR HUSBAND KEEP IT?

I DON'T KNOW FOR SURE... BUT IT'S AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE.



W DO YOU? HE SAID IT WILL BE RIGHT?

WELL, WE MIGHT AS WELL START LOOKING FOR IT, SO WE CAN GET OUTTA HERE AND ASK HIM HOW THEY FIND HIS BODY?



CAN'T IT WAIT TILL MORNING, BERT?

WHY NOT... MONEY?



BARBARA? IT'S JUST OFFER UP LAST...

IT'S SOMEBODY BEING TALKING FROM NEW OR, BERT?



But the next day, things did not go as smoothly as they had. Planned? No! And Pld could not find a trace of the body...



You say he kept it here in the light house?

Yes! Yes! He kept it some where in this place! Keep looking...

And look, they did! For almost two weeks they searched! They searched the lighthouse with a piece of wood, some jewelry box... but no sign!



It's not to be here... it's not it?

Maybe... maybe if he didn't keep it here... where he did it... the storehouse... on the boat dock...



I'll go down to the beach to the storehouse! You try the storehouse! Don't worry! I'll find it!



Caution! Pld made her way down the steps to the beach...

I don't think Hank would have kept his money down here! It wouldn't have been safe.



Slowly she searched the rocks near the shore...

A coin box could have this ring... and... and... that...



PLD! PLD! What is it?



It's Hank! My husband! He's... he's come back! He's come back from the sea...

FLO! COME QUICKLY!



WHAT IS IT, BERT? WHAT... WHO... OR... NO? IT CAN'T BE!

IT'S AIN'T FLO! GOSH, BACK AGAIN? WE CAN GET OUT OF HERE!



IT'S AIN'T FLO! HE WE'S ALL... JEREMY!

COULD LOOK AT REAL FLO! THE FISH AND OTHER THING MADE HIM JEREMY!



WELL, WE GO WITH YOU, FLO! YES, BERT? WHY DON'T WE PHONE THE POLICE AND...

AND WE CAN'T! IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE OUT ON A FISHING TRIP! IT'S AS A STRANGE COINCIDENCE THAT THE BODY WASHES UP AGAIN... AGAIN AGAIN!



WELL, THE STRANGER YOU'VE GOT TO MAKE SURE SOMEONE FINDS HIS DEAD FISH!

I KNOW! I'LL DRIVE UP-DOCK TO FALGOUTH AND BETTER OF TOWNERS OF TOWNERS HE BODY INTO THE SEA...



I'LL LEAVE IT RIGHT BY THE BEACH, AS IF IT WAS WASHED UP THERE! THEN SOMEONE'S GOING TO FIND IT!

THAT'S A GOOD IDEA, BERT!



AND YOU'VE JUST ABOUT GONE TO FALGOUTH, TWENTY MILES AWAY OF YOUR BEHAVIOR LAST HOUR... AND LEFT THE BODY ON THE BEACH!

THERE! SOMEONE'LL FIND IT, COME MORNING!



OUT THE LIGHT PASSED... AND NO MORE CAME? I'LL LISTEN TO EVERY WORD YOU SAY... BUT THERE WAS NO MENTION OF FREDERICK BARK'S BODY?

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HIM, DEAT? WHO KNEW THEY FOUND HIM... HEY?

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, JUST I LEFT HIM RIGHT ON THE PALMBOOM BEACH? FIDELER SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME.



THEY'LL FIND HIM, DEAT. I DON'T LET'S LOOK FOR THE "JERRY" AGAIN!

THE "JERRY" "JERRY"? THAT'S ALL YOU THINK OF? DON'T YOU KNOW YOU THAT BARK'S BODY MUST COME BACK FROM THE SEA? DON'T IT BOTHER YOU THAT THEY STILL HAVEN'T FOUND HIM?



WOW! "JERRY" IS NOTHING BUT WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?

DRIVE UP TO THROUGHOUT AGAIN? SEE IF THE "JERRY" SPEAKS OF THAT "JERRY"!

DEAT? IF YOU WANT ME TO I'LL GO "JERRY" I'LL MAKE IT BY NIGHT AND I CAN BE BACK BY THE A.M.

I'LL WAIT UP FOR YOU!



DEAT LEFT THE LIGHTHOUSE FLOUNDER AND STARTED OUT FOR PALMBOOM? THE WHOLE CHASE? AND THE CLING CLING CLING? CLINGING IN THE BLACK NIGHT, THE SOUND OF THE BOARDING AND FLOODING, THE BOGS SHATTERED THE DARKNESS?

I KNOW, WHEN DEAT FIRST CAME TO THE LIGHT... TO WAIT FOR BARK...



I KNOW THAT, THAT IN THIS POINT WOULD ONE OF HIS AIR ME? AND YET... I COULD NOT ASK BY MYSELF? I WAS "JERRY" WITH "JERRY" "JERRY" NAME OR ME, ASKING ME FOR THE "JERRY" "JERRY" NO ONE? NO ONE THERE AS ANYWHERE? I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF? WHEN DEAT TOLD... I TELL ME LOVE WITH ME.



AND NOW WE'VE REACHED BARK? AND WE THERE ON TO THE SEA, BUT THE SEA KEEPS MEAT AND BACK TO... "JERRY" "JERRY" "JERRY" I LOOK LIKE SLAMMER, DOWN IN THE UNDER THE DOOR?

IT'S "JERRY" "JERRY" "JERRY" THAT "JERRY" "JERRY" TO ME? "JERRY"?



THE TERRIFIED FLORENCE BACKED AWAY FROM THE DOOR, BACK TO THE SPIRAL STAIRCASE THAT LED TO THE TOP OF THE LIGHTHOUSE?



SLOWLY THE BACKS OF THE STAIRCASE

THE DOOR... HE'S OPENED THE DOOR! I CAN HEAR HIM... COMING ACROSS THE OTHER DOOR! COMING TO THE STAIRS.



HE'S ON THE STAIRS NOW! I CAN HEAR HIS FOOTSTEPS... COMING UP COMING UP AFTER ME!



SUDDENLY, FLORENCE FOUND HERSELF AT THE TOP OF THE LIGHTHOUSE... NO PLACE TO GO... CAUGHT LIKE A RAT IN A TRAP!



HE'S COMING! SLOWER! HE'S REACHING THE TOP OF THE STAIRS! HE'LL BE HERE... SOON... HE... HE'S... COMING... COMING... COMING...



A NEW WINDY DAY, AND SHE'S UP! IT WAS SCARY!



PLIP! THE LIGHT'S OFF! YOU... YOU DON'T HEAR? WHAT'S THROUGH THE FLOOR? LOOKS LIKE SEA WATER!



LEAVE UP TO THE LIGHT! PLIP! PLIP! MUST BE FLOOR! TO PROVE I'LL GO UP AND HELP HER!



ONE'S GONNA TO BE ANGRY WHEN I TELL HER ABOUT NAME'S BODY WHEN SOME FROM PALMER'S BEACH? FIRST IT MUSTA BEEN LOW TIDE WHEN I PUT IT THERE... AND IT PROBABLY GOT WASHED OUT TO SEA AGAIN.



A-A-A-G-H-H!



AND THE NEXT MORNING, WITH THE GOVERNMENT RESCUE-TEAMS TO INVESTIGATE WITH THE LIGHT SAUNTERER!

NOT A BASH OR BENT! I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! WHAT'S THAT STUFF ALL ABOUT?

LOOKS LIKE SCARED!



RAY, PRED! WHAT'S THAT... DOWN ON THE BEACH?

LOOKS LIKE ANOTHER STUFF! LET'S GO DOWN AND TAKE A LOOK...



AND THAT'S THE STORY, BEAR READER! IN ORDER TO FIND NAME'S BODIES UP THERE AT THE TOP OF THAT LIGHT HOUSE'S OLD MARK. REALLY COME BACK ON WHAT IT JUST BENT AND PLIP'S BODIES ARE CERTAINLY, HIS COMPANION WAS HONORABLE! WHAT? IT'S NOT TRUE... HEY, HEY, I ALWAYS TELL ABOUT CARRIERS THAT REFUSE TO STAY DOWN AND FIGHT IN GUN, OR BEAT OR... IN THE WAY! IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN THAT \$4,000, THEY WOULD BE... IN A SENSELESSLY ON NAME'S SCOT IT WAS ALL SUPER-HEARD AND NOT TEL... HEY, HEY... JUST LIKE POOL NAME!



AND DON'T FORGET... WHEN YOU SEE YOU LIKE MY STORY ADDRESS THE LETTER TO: THE WALK-KEEPER 20 E. MONTAGNA BY PRESCOTT, ANTONIA BEANS

WHAT IS THE TERROR SURROUNDING THIS ONCE GLEAMING HOME?
WHY DO THE VERY WALLS SHAKE AS IF FROM SOME IMPENDING DISASTER?
WHO ARE THE SHADOWY DWELLERS HIDING HERE UNDER THE SPELL OF

The curse of HARKLEY HEATH

AMERICAN SUSPENSE STORY
THE VAULT OF
HORROR!

"I AM, SIR, LILLIAN HARKLEY,
HEIR FROM THE MORTAL WORLD
DEFLECTED BY MY KILLARNOE
BROTHER, CAN DO NOTHING TO
PREVENT BY DEATH FROM YOUR
OWN EYES HIS POSSESSION."

THIS IS "HARKLEY HEATH" — A MAJESTIC MANSION, NOW
CHANDLER AND DECAYED, SETTING ON THE ENDLESS MOON —
AND THE GREAT FORTUNE WHICH BECAME THIS ACQUIRED
FAMILY LINE OF DOOM IS SHARED BY THE LAST MEMBERS OF
THE HARKLEY CLAN!

... BUT THIS FORTUNE HANGS FROM MY SCORCHED HANDS BY A
SINGLE THREAD WHICH UPON IT I MAY THE WEALTH CORRUPT
AND SPENT EACH SUCCESSIVE GENERATION, UNTIL THE
REMAINS OF RAGE AND RUMOR SHALL BLAST OUT THIS
FAMILY AND THE WORLD SHALL KNOW NO MORE OF THE VILE
HARKLEY BLOOD! REFUGED RIGHT IN FRONT!

WANT
MAY BEAT
POUNDS!



HOW CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT STUPID OLD FAMILY CURSEL, SAH? THE MONEY IS GONE, NOW, AND WE CAN'T GET IT BACK! WE ARE THE LAST OF THE HARKLEYS!

W-W-WHAT, YOUR COUSIN EDGAR, SUPPOSE SOMEONE FOUND OUT THAT HE HADN'T DIED? WOULD YOU?

NEVER SAY THAT AGAIN, EDGAR! FORGET IT EVER HAPPENED! AND STOP THAT WHINING! I TELL YOU WITH ME AND BOBBIE CAN...

RAP RAP RAP



GOOD EVENING, SAH! THE \$5,000,000, YOUR DEAR DEPARTED UNCLE'S LAWYER IS... SAH? I... SAH? YOUR... YOUR...



IT'S BEEN OVER, HARKLEY! I WANTED TO DO, IF YOU DON'T WANT!



YES, YES, MIGHT BE!



I KNOW THAT THIS IS AN HOUR OF GREAT SORROW FOR YOU, BUT IT'S MY DUTY TO INFORM YOU OF YOUR UNCLE'S WILL!



YES, YOUR UNCLE HAS SPECIFIED THAT ALL OF HIS WEALTH SHALL GO TO ME, SAH!



I... I'M SO SURPRISED, MR. HARKLEY!... THE MONEY!

I UNDERSTAND, MR. HARKLEY! I'LL LEAVE YOU THEN, AND I WILL SEE YOU EVERY-ONE OF THESE NEXT WEEK!



JUST LOOK AT ME! THEY MUST HATE ME!
 I SWEAR I DON'T KNOW HE
 HAS A WILL! BUT NOTHING HAS
 CHANGED! I'LL BRING THE MONEY
 WITH YOU! YOU MUST BELIEVE ME!

OF COURSE! COULD
 EVER! OF COURSE!
 NOW WOULD BE THE
 BEST TO BRING
 WITH!



THE SINGLE TREMBLING BROWN HAIR FALLING
 IN SHAPES OF HORROR ON THE CRACKED WALLS! SHE
 TERRIBLY WISHED THE STAIRS DOWNWARD THAT SHE
 MIGHT BE HER LAST NIGHT - ALONE

THEY DON'T BELIEVE
 ME! I CAN SEE IT IN
 THEIR EYES! THEY'LL
 MURDER ME!



BUT BUT
 CAN WE RISK
 IT?

WE MUST! LONG HAS COULD
 EGGAR, YOU'VE HUNGROED ONCE
 ALREADY! THERE'S NO TURNING
 BACK, NOW!



WITH SOME OF THE
 MURDER WHOLE
 HISSER USED IN THE
 LAST DAYS OF MR.
 EGGER, WE CAN

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT,
 COULD CHARLES. AS USUAL?
 BUT WE MUST DO IT QUICKLY!
 MURDER. WOULD YOU'S ALREADY?

AND WHILE THE VILLAINS COULD PLAN THE
 THEIR MURDEROUS DEED, SYBIL WAS WAITING
 WAITING FOR THE FATAL POSTERIOR TO
 HER DOOR.



I KNOW THEY'RE COMING
 TO GET ME! BUT THEY DON'T
 KNOW I HAVE THIS!



I'LL GO IN
 FIRST! WHEN
 I BRANCH,
 YOU GET THE
 MURDER PLAN!

I HAVE TO GO
 TIME TO HEAR
 COULD EVER.
 BUT



WHY... WHY
 ARE YOU
 HERE?



HERE I AM, JOHN CHARLES!
DO YOU THINK YOU COULD TALK ME
SO EARLY? YOU'RE A POOL,
CHARLES. A WORTHLESS POOL!



LET US
LET US GO
AAAAAAH!

CHARLES, HELP ME!
I'VE GOT HER!



NOW THE NEEDLE, EDGEM?
QUICKLY! AND THIS WILL KEEP
YOU QUIET! MY DEAR GUY,
PERMANENTLY QUIET! THAT
MONEY WILL BE MINE!



YOU SAID YOU WOULDN'T SHOOT!
YOU COULD HAVE KILL ME, BUT
YOU CAN'T KILL THE MARSHY
GUY! I'LL COME BACK
FROM THE GRAVE! GUY!
YOU SHOULDN'T DO THAT!
MONEY! I'LL GET YOU!



IS SHE IS SHE
DEAD, JOHN
CHARLES?

OF COURSE SHE'S
DEAD! YOU DON'T! NO
ONE COULD LIVE
WITH THAT WOUND
IN THEM! IT WAS
NO BARK, WASTY! I'
SHOOTED! SHE'S
GONE, GONE, GONE!



DOWN DOWN THROUGH THE ECHOES, MURTY HALL! DOWN TO THE
SUBTERRANEAN GARAGE, WHERE THE HOLEY GUY WAS
KILLED!

WONDER WHO'LL CARRY
HER OUT TO THE MOON!

THE POOR GUY! WHEN SHEY
FOUND EVERYONE WILL BELIEVE
SHE WENT AWAY AFTER UNCLE
BOBIE'S DEATH!



AND THEN THE
MONEY! IT'S ALL
GONE! GONE
AND... JEREMY!

WHY WHY WHY ARE YOU
LOOKING AT ME, MURTY
HALL? DON'T
DO IT! YOU'RE
DOING THAT!

"FOR ONE HORRIBLE MOMENT THE DOORS SPARED AT EACH OTHER! THE BRAGGARTING BLOKE IN CHARLES' EYE TELLS EDGAR THE TERRIBLE TRUTH! IT WAS THE BASS LOUIS STEEL, HAS BEEN REPORTING HER DEATH.



"THE CROWD'S A FOOL! HE'S THE ONLY ONE IN MY VIEW, BUT I'LL FIGHT HIM!"



"I DON'T LIKE IT, GUSSE CHARLES! I DON'T WANT YOU TO BE THAT MURDERER!"

"YOU'RE NOT REALLY AFRAID OF HER, ARE YOU? STANLEY!"



"THE HOUSE. I CAN FEEL HER EVERYWHERE! SHE'S... SHE'S HUNTING ME! WE'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH IT, CHARLES!"

"STOP THERMALS, EDGAR! SHE'S DEAD, AND SHE'S DEAD FOREVER!"



"B-BUT I CAN HEAR HER! SHE'S COMING TO GET US! THAT HOUSE... DON'T YOU HEAR IT?"

"STOP BARRING, YOU WRETCH! THE MAN IS BARRING THE DOOR! YOU'RE JUST THE STONE!"



"BUT CHARLES! YOU DON'T KNOW! SHE'S THE GHOST!"

"OH, OH, NO! YOU'RE AFRAID OF A DEAD WOMAN! YOU FOOL! IT'S ME YOU SHOULD BE AFRAID OF!"



CHARLES NO!

"THE BRAGGARTING WRETCH! I'VE DON'T ALLOWED THAT MURDER!"



"YOU... YOU... YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN THE FEAR! SHE'LL GET YOU, TOO!"

"YOU WON'T GET AWAY FROM ME!"



THE DIAMOND OF DEATH!

The glitter of the huge diamond in Crandall's upturned palm almost blinded him. Even in the darkened room, its brilliance was enough to illuminate the sharp contours of his crafty face. His eyes were wide with a joy he had never felt before . . . his thin lips quivered with anticipation and triumph! He had found it . . . after years as Butler here in the house of Silas Morgan, he had at last discovered the secret hiding place of the fabulous Diamond of Death!

Suddenly the door behind him swung open and Crandall whirled in surprise. The old man blazed. Silas Morgan leaning on his cane . . . came slowly into the room, his eyes focused on the glittering gem still held in Crandall's palm.

"T-You've found it," Morgan stammered, his own eyes glaring wide as they contemplated the priceless diamond! "T-Put it back . . . it will never bring anything but tragedy to you, you fool! Put it back before it casts its spell over YOU, or it has over every one who has possessed it!"

Crandall's fat closed tighter over the sharp-edged stone, and he strained to remember the legend that had grown around the gem he had found at last. What were the stone's peculiar . . . almost supernatural powers supposed to be? Oh, yes . . . that was

where about it causing its owner to vanish from the Earth without a trace! FINE SCENE!

The old man lunged at him in that instant and Crandall stepped aside quickly, his foot stumbling out in time to send Morgan crashing headlong to the floor. In the swerve of the Diamond of Death he was supposed to disappear without a trace, he thought to himself, waving Morgan's cane and smashing it against the old man's skull! Well . . . he would make certain that Morgan, its last owner . . . DID vanish forever!

Crandall slammed the louvered door shut and left the cellar, his giggle turning to a roar of laughter. Old Morgan was gone . . . no trace of the man who collected valuable gems and tropical plants would EVER be found after the flames had done their worst! With satisfaction he left the huge diamond in his palm as he entered the plant room to look around for the last time. His gaze darted from one color-splattered leaf to another . . . never again would he have to tend these monsters of the jungle!

Something rubbery grazed the back of his neck and he whirled with surprise. The thing that Morgan had called the "Man-Eater" was reaching its long green tentacles toward him. Desperately he tried to step away from its groping hand . . . but a massive arm enveloped him and dragged him inexorably toward the plant's gaping mouth! Crandall struggled . . . a scream shrilled from his lips . . . but he was held fast and drawn closer and closer to that yawning mouth! He tried to squirm free . . . to scratch and bite his way free . . . but his hand was being enveloped in that stinging foliage that wouldn't permit him to fight back.

The movement made the swollen head of the "Man-Eater" stopped . . . all was quiet in the room. And then something appeared on the lips of the plant . . . trembled there for an instant . . . fell quickly to the floor. The room was once again swathed in quiet and darkness . . . except for the Diamond of Death gleaming at the foot of the Man-Eater plant!



IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, WHEN A FEAR-LESS DOCTOR WAS ANATOMY INSTRUCTOR AT THE SURVEILLANCE SCHOOL OF HAMPSHIRE, IT WAS THE STRANGE BUT UNIVERSAL TRAGEDY OF THE CUSTOM JOB PROFESSION TO PROVIDE THE CADAVERS USED BY THEIR PUPILS FOR EXPERIENCE... NOT OUT OF THIS PAULT... AND A MAD DESIRE TO KEEP HIS JOB AT ALL COSTS... SAVED L'ESPOIR'S SOLEMONIC REPUTATION AS...

DOCTOR OF HORROR

THESE MEN MAKE YOU THE MOST SCOURGED AFTER BETRAYAL IN THE WHOLE ANATOMY DEPARTMENT! WHERE DO YOU GET THEM ALL?

YOU'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT, DOCTOR!

THE SUSPENSE STORY OF THE VAULT OF HORROR!

YOU KNOW PERFECTLY WELL, DOCTOR L'ESPOIR... YOUR CUSTOM FOR YOUR PUPILS TO EXPERIENCE WHY IT'S BEEN THE CUSTOM FOR PROFESSIONS TO PROVIDE THE CADAVERS USED IN THEIR CLASS-ROOMS FOR DESTRUCTION... YOU'LL HAVE TO GET THEM YOURSELF!

YES, I WILL.

IN THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF HAMPSHIRE'S JARVIS SCHOOL, HARTING INVESTIGATION JOHN PLANT HAS THE

THE ATTENTION OF FOUR SCARERS IS PULLING OFF L'ESPOIR IF YOU WANT TO GET HIM AS A TEACHER IN ANATOMY... YOU'VE GOT TO GET MORE PUPILS!

B-BUT JOHN DOCTOR FEAR!



I... I CAN'T LOSE THIS POSITION HERE AT MURPHY'S SCHOOL. I'VE GOT TO HOLD ONTO IT AT ALL COSTS! I... I'LL GET BODIES FOR MY CLASS... NO MATTER WHAT! I HAVE TO GO TO GET THEM!



DRIVEN ON BY THE FEAR OF LOSING HIS POSITION, ALFRED LEWNEY ALIGNED LEWNEY'S BRAGGED-ON SKILLING FOR A PLAN TO SUPPLY HIS PUPILS WITH CANNONBALLS! AND SUBTLY...

WHAT A PLAN, I'VE BEEN! WHILE I'VE BRAGGED ABOUT MYSELF FOR YEARS, WHEN IT COMES TO MY PUPILS... THERE'S BEEN A MAMMOTH SUPPLY RIGHT UNDER MY VERY NOSE! THE TOWERS OF BUFFALO... IT'S THE ANSWER!



THIS MAN... JOHN FARRON... GOT TO STAY... AND WAS BORN! JUST THIS MORNING ON SPANISH HILL! THERE'S NO ONE ABOUT TO SEE ME TAKE THE BODY... IF I WERE CANNONBALL AND ALL THAT!



THIS IS THE ONE? JOHN FARRON... BELONGS TO MURPHY'S SCHOOL... AND NO ONE ELSE! EVER KNOWS HOW I GOT IT! LET THE OTHER INSTRUCTORS WHO ABANDONED ONE ANOTHER FOR THE BODIES OF CANNONBALLS... IT'S SET BY OWN SUPPLY!



ALFRED LEWNEY, FARRON, AND OTHER AS HE WAS, REVERTING TO HIS FORMER STATE OF MIND AND COURAGE TALENTS WHEN IT CAME TO PROTECTING THE JOB HE BELIEVED IN. BUT... AND SO THROUGH THE LONG HOURS OF THE NIGHT, HIS BODIES FLEW UNDISCOVERED.



I... I'VE STAYED THE... BUT NOT... LONELY...

ALFRED LEWNEY, AND OTHERS IN HIS JOB... AND AS TIME WENT ON, HIS OWN SUPPLY OF CANNONBALLS FAILED TO ARRIVE, HE BEGAN TO WITHDRAW PUPILS FROM ALL FORMS OF CANNONBALLS...



GAH!... NOT A BRAGGER... NOT A MAN... IT SHOULD BE WITH HIM... AT LEAST... BUT... HE WOULD... WANT TO LET ME CONTINUE FOR A... LITTLE WHILE... BUT NOT!



MY CLASSROOMS ARE THE LARGEST IN THE WHOLE SCHOOL... AND ALL BECAUSE I'VE BEEN SMART ENOUGH TO GET MORE BODIES THAN ANY OTHER TEACHER! AT LAST I CAN BREAK THE BARRIERS... BY GETTING THIS POSITION!

LEMONY'S JOB WAS SECURE BUT AFTER A TIME HIS POSITION BEGAN TO ASSESS ITSELF AS HE HEARD THE OTHER TEACHERS REFER TO HIM AS A LEADING PROFESSOR OF ORATORY.

MUST I SPEAK MY MOUTH LIKE CHIRPING SPARROWS IN THE DORMROOM SCHOOL, THEN? MUST BE A MORE IMPORTANT JOB FOR A MAN OF MY TALENTS? WHO I COULD ONLY FIND.



SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL COLLEGE ARE COMING HOME TOMORROW... THE REASON FOR THEIR VISIT IS TO SELECT A SUCCESSION FOR ME? I HAVE BEEN APPOINTED GOVERNOR OF THE ENTIRE MEDICAL SCHOOL, HERE... AND THE POSITION OF DEAN WILL BE OPEN? THE CHOICE LIES BETWEEN YOU AND DR. GRADSHAW... AND AT THE PRESENT TIME, GRADSHAW IS FIRST IN LINE FOR THE JOB?



AND HOW HAS YOUR POPULARITY GROWN, LEMONY? AND THE NUMBER OF SALARIES YOU'RE ABLE TO PROVIDE?

WELL... I OVERRUNNED? I--YOU Took me by SURPRISE?



W--WELL, I AM... TELL ME PLEASE? WHAT BRINGS YOU TO MY HUMBLE ROOM...?



URGENT BUSINESS, LEMONY? AND PERHAPS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU? I WANT YOU TO LISTEN CAREFULLY TO ME... YOU'VE DEVOTEDLY A MAN WHO HAS TO BE TOLD SOMETHING ONLY ONCE?

BUT YOU STILL HAVE A CHOICE... IF YOU HAD CHOSEN THE REPUTATION THAT YOU'RE A BETTER MAN THAN GRADSHAW? I SUGGEST YOU PREPARE A CLASS OR COURSE IN ORATION FOR TOMORROW... AND MAKE IT THE VERY LESSON OF YOUR CAREER... IF YOU WANT THAT JOB?



Y--YES, DR. FORD... I'LL DO MY BEST?

GRADSHAW IS GREAT TO ME FOR THAT JOB? IT'S WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED... DEAN OF HARVARD'S SURVIVING SCHOOL... IT IS APPOINTED TO GET YOU OUT OF THE WAY.



YOU'RE OUT THE REST OF THE TEACHERS TALKING ABOUT YOUR SUCCESS IN GETTING PROMOTED FOR YOUR LECTURES? WHAT'S YOUR CAREFULLY BLUNDER NEXT, LEMONY?... WHERE DO YOU GO? THEN HE? ?

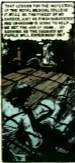
I--YOU'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT, DR. GRADSHAW?





"YOU'RE ASKING LEMMON? IS HE?"

"HEY BOB, BE CAREFUL— JUST DON'T GO GETTING THAT JOB! ANY OTHERS, BUT WHEN IT COMES TO STAY IN MY SHIRT?"



"THAT LETTER FOR THE INSPECTION OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL COLLEGE IT FALLS IN THE FINEST OF MY CAREER, JUST AS FIRST-CONSORTED AND CHANCE IS GOING TO HELP ME GET THE JOB OF DEAN. BY LEAVING AS THE DISCOVER MY PEOPLE WILL EXPERIMENT! GET"

"THROUGH THE LONG HOURS OF THAT NIGHT AFTER LEMMON TOOK A... BUT CHALLENGE THIS... BUTTING THE PAGE OF AN ORANGE... AS THAT IT WAS UNDESIRABLE? AN... HIS GREEN PAINT A SUCCESS..."



"LET ME BE THE FIRST TO CONGRATULATE YOU, LEMMON. EFFECTIVE ON THE FIRST OF THE MONTH YOU WILL BE THE NEW DEAN! CHANCE'S SECOND DISAPPEARANCE WAS AN UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT, BUT IT SERVED ONLY TO CLEAR THE WAY FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT!"

The morning news of LEMMON'S AND AT LAST BEING AS THE DEAN OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL COLLEGE LEMMON'S AMBITIONS WERE AGAIN BORN TO LIFE.



"THE BARR FOR ME, LEMMON LEMMON'S"

"SOMETHING WORSEY HAS COME UP, LEMMON..."

"I'LL BE HOME FOR SEVERAL HOURS OF YOU HAVE TO CONTACT ME, I'LL BE IN CONTACT WITH THE ROYAL JUDICIARY"

"WELL, BEING DEAN OF ALL HEALTH FROM THE POST THEY GAVE YOU? THEY'LL BE LOOKING FOR A SUCCESSOR AS DEAN OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL. I MUST GET THE JOB? IT MEANS AS MUCH AS LIFE THAT I CAN"

"I'M HAVING AN UNUSUAL CALM AND RELAXED TO THE POINT, ALONE LEMMON JOURNEYED TO THE OFFICE OF THE ROYAL SURGEON GENERAL TO PLEASE THE CASE FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE POST BELONGING BY DEAN FIRST. FINALLY HE OPENED A BLOOD VESSEL IN HIS EYE..."



"HE WILL CONSIDER ME IF I CAN PROVE THAT THE SCHOOL HAS PROGRESSIVE IDEAS I BEGAN 'DEAN' AS INSPECTION WILL BE MADE OF CLASSES, TOGETHER I MUST PROVE?"



"I MUST PUBLISH CLASSERS FOR EVERY CLASS IN SCHOOL BY TOMORROW NIGHT. HOW, THREE THOUSAND? AND BEING KNOWN IN OUT OF THE QUESTION FOR THAT? IT'S AN OBSESSION THAT CALLS FOR MORE DRAMATIC MEASURES! LEMMON... JUST THE SORT OF PLACE I WANT?"



I HEARD TELL THAT I CAN FIND A HANDFUL OF BARRY MEN HERE WHO ARE ANXIOUS TO LEARN A SOLDIERMAN FOR A CAT'S WHISKER! THE SORT OF WORD THAT BRINGS FORTUNES TO US COMRADES! WHAT IS THERE ANYONE INTERESTED?

FOR A SOLDIERMAN? SPEAK YOUR MIND, BUY NOW WE'RE ALL EAR!

FOR THE FIRST FIFTEEN BONES DELIVERED TO THE HONORABLE BARBICAN SCHOOL, COMRADE! I PAY A SOLDIERMAN ABOUT! BUT THE COMRADES MUST BE OF AN RECENTLY OCCASIONED DISPOSITION AND THEY MUST BE PLACED ONLY FROM THE VERY WATERTIGHT NEIGHBORHOOD! AMBUSH!

Y-Y-YES! YOU'VE GOT A DEAL, COMRADE!

ALFRED LEAVES I WAS DELIGHTED WITH THE BONES HE WOULD BRING! RESULT IN HIS PROMOTION TO THE GOVERNORSHIP OF THE ENTIRE HONORABLE MEDICAL SCHOOL, AND IF HONORABLE PEOPLE WERE NOT WITH HIM AND HONORABLE... THAT WAS THE COURSE OF HISTORY, AS YOU CAN HEAR!

I MUST HAVE YOUR REGISTRATION FOR THE INSPECTION BY THE HONORABLE BARBICAN THE EVENING, COMRADE! YOU STAY AT HOME!

A BUNCH OF SOLDIERMAN WILL COME IN THE COURSE OF THE EVENING, I WANT YOU TO PREPARE THEM FOR COMRADE THE SLAYER! I HAVE TO COMRADE THE... AUTHORITIES, TO MAKE SURE THAT NOTHING GOES WRONG WITH THE PLAN! I'LL BE BACK AT SIX O'CLOCK!

COMRADE COMRADE! YOU TO BRING THE PEOPLE AND GET THE BARBICAN READY FOR THE GREATEST EXCHANGE OF MY LIFE! BUT THERE IS A LITTLE PROBLEM! YOU'VE GONE TO THE LADDER WITH ME BY CARESS!



AS WE GO DOWN STREETS OF THE CITY-FORTS, I WANT IN YOUR BLOOD BONES! I'LL GIVE YOU AND BRING THEM CAREY OUT BY INSTRUCTIONS OF THEIR SUCCESS! COMRADE! COMRADE BY COMRADE!

THE BONES FLOODED BY AN ALFRED LEAVES I BRINGING BONES AND BONES COMRADE! AND AS THEY COMRADE STREET AFTER STREET WITHOUT MEETING A SINGLE PROSPECTIVE COMRADE! COMRADE! COMRADE!

COMRADE! YOU MUST FOR COMRADE! IT'S BONES EVERYONE COMRADE! YOU'VE GOT TO GO INTO THE COMRADE! COMRADE FOR COMRADE!

A FEW MINUTES LATER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF THE NEARBY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL, A PAIR OF ANKLES WERE PEELED THROUGH THE WINDOW TO THE STREET BELOW.

"DOCTOR LEIGHTON WILL BE FAMILIAR WITH ME! THOSE BODIES THAT WERE TO BE DELIVERED WERE BY HIM COLLARED FOR HIS OWNERS' GLAMES... THERE'S BEEN NO SIGN OF THEM!"



AND THE OTHER ANSWER? "LET'S SAY, YES? THERE IS A TERRIBLE MISHAPMENT. IN THE MEAL HALLS, SOMEONE COULD HAVE TRIPPED TO MAKE THE INSPECTION, AND NOTHING IS READY!"



"I SHOULD GO OUT TO SEARCH FOR THE BODIES AND TELL YOU THAT THE BODIES HAVEN'T GAINED MY MARRIAGE YET? THE BODIES... STARTED ME!"



"WE WERE TOLD TO BRING CORPSES HERE TO THE DEPTHS..."

"Y-THOSE HEAVENS... YOU'VE GOTTEN HERE AT LAST?"

"FOLLOW ME RIGHT TO THE ANATOMY ROOM... AND YOU'LL BE TALKING WITH THE REST OF THE TEACHERS! IF THE ROYAL MURDER ABOVE AND YOUR GREAT ENGLISH CORPSES... DOCTOR LEIGHTON WILL BE OF ASSISTANCE!"



"IT'S IT... NOT TO BRING THEM AND GET THOSE OTHER BODIES WERE AS EASILY AS POSSIBLE? THERE'S NOT A MURDER YET! IT'S ALMOST SIX O'CLOCK ALREADY!"

"IF WE'RE DONE THE BEST WE CAN, BESTER... AND IF SOMEONE HADN'T HELPED US OUT WE WOULDN'T EVEN HAVE GOTTEN THIS FAR!"



"STOP TALKING... AND SEARCH! THE BODIES MUST BE PREPARED... AND I HAVE TO LOCATE DOCTOR LEIGHTON! SOMEBODY IN THE WEAHER... HE CAN BE LIST... OR MAY HAVE MET UP WITH SOME UNDESIRABLE ACCIDENT!"



"HURRY... WE CAN'T WAIT ANY! EVERYTHING DOCTOR LEIGHTON HAS DONE IN THE PAST HAS BEEN JUST A PREPARATION FOR TODAY! WE MUST HELP HIM REMOVE THE BODIES HE DESERVES!"



AND ON THAT VERY NIGHT IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, DOCTOR ALFRED LEIGHTON'S JOB BECAME THE MOST IMPORTANT AND MOST DESERVED!"



HEARD THE GUNBOAT IN THE DISTANCE AND LAID A TRAP. THESE MEN AND THE BIRD WERE ABOVE THE MORGAN MURDER. THE FACTS, A GREAT DEAL OF THE BIRD'S MIND, WERE ALL THAT HEARD TO THE MORGAN.

LITTLE BY LITTLE HE STARTED LOOKING DOWN ON A TRAIL OF BONES BENEATH US ON THE SURFACE OF THE OCEAN THAT THIS LITTLE ISLAND CALLED. THIS LITTLE SPOT OF THIS WORLD IN THE FOLLOWSING MORGAN'S, BUT IT IS ALL GONE BY HANDS AS MENTAL MEN MIGHT DO IT.

THEY SHOULD PROVE TOGETHER WITH THE TRAIL THE REALITY OF THE

ISLAND of DEATH



OH YOU NOTICE THAT LITTLE ISLAND DOWN THERE, STEVE? I CAN'T FIND IT ON THE CHARTS!



OH YOU NOTICE THAT LITTLE ISLAND DOWN THERE, STEVE? I CAN'T FIND IT ON THE CHARTS!



THE FUEL PUMP BEGINS TO BE JAMMED! THE MOTOR'S COMING OUT!

STEVE! STEVE! WE'RE LOSING ALTITUDE!

SPUT! SPUT!

SuspenseStory
THE VAULT OF
HORROR!

I DON'T HAVE
 ANY LONG I
 REMAINED
 UNDISCOVERED,
 BUT WHEN I
 CAME TO, I
 FOUND MY BODY
 WAS COVERED
 BY WITH A SKY,
 CLEAN BUT IT
 CLOTHING AND A
 HOT BATH WAS
 WAITING FOR ME!
 I RECOVERED
 MYSELF AND
 WENT TO MEET
 MY BROTHER-IN-LAW.



HOT HOT YOU HAVE
 REMEMBERED AT LAST!
 I TRUST YOU FEEL
 BETTER, MR. CRANE!



YES, MR. STEPHEN CRANE? I FOUND
 YOUR NAME AMONG YOUR EFFECTS!
 PERMIT ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF!
 I AM COUNT ALAN GABRIEL. HE FOUND
 YOU UNCONSCIOUS IN FRONT OF THE
 BODY? YOU HAVE BEEN HEALED & LIVE
 THIS MORNING! FIRST WE WILL EAT,
 THEN WE WILL TALK!

THE COURT HAS A HIGH MEAL PREPARED! THE FOOD
 WAS EXCELLENT! THE COURT HAS THE PERFECT HOST, BUT
 NEITHER I COULD NOT ENJOY IT! THERE WAS AN EYE
 EVERYWHERE TO THE WHOLE GASTRO AND IT'S TWO LOVELY
 OCCASIONS, COUNT ALAN GABRIEL AND HIS BLEND
 BROTHER, MAJOR.



I TRUST EVERYTHING WAS TO
 YOUR LIKING, MR. CRANE? COME,
 LET US NOW RETURN TO MY
 TROPHY ROOM! THERE WE SHALL
 TALK, AND I WILL TELL YOU
 ABOUT MYSELF!

THE COURT
 HAD A PRE-
 TASTING
 TROPHY ROOM
 THERE WAS A
 PROPORTY OF
 EVERY SEN-
 SIBLE
 FIVE OF SELF
 ANIMAL.
 OTHER GAMES
 IN THE HALL OF
 STRANGERS
 ABOUT THE
 ROOM!



AS WE
 CAN OFFER
 I AM-GIVE
 THE PARTY!

I'VE BATTLED IN THE FATHERS' CONGRESS
 OF THE WORLD! I'VE CLIMBED MOUNT
 TAINS TO SPOOT GORILLAS, BIGHORN!
 I'VE HARNESSED THE BEARS FOR SAIL-FOOT
 TURNS, BULLOCK WHALES! I'VE FIGHT
 THE CHANGING WINDS IN BOON, THE
 FEAR-CRAZED GAINS SUFFOLD, THE
 BARK SAYS BY SERIAL, TOOK!



MY NERVES ARE LIKE TENDERED
 STEEL, MY HAND IS STEADY, MY
 AM DEADLY! I HAVE FITTED MY
 STRINGS AGAINST THE NORTHWEST
 OF BASKETS!



I'VE BATTLED WITH THE CRAFT,
 SETS OF ANIMALS, THAT IS, ALL BUT
 ONE! THERE IS ONE ANIMAL I
 HAVE STILL TO HUNT!



... WE'LL BE CRANE, I HAVE STUFF TO MATCH WITH BY THE CHARTERED TOP ANIMALS. SEND EXPRESS. MARY! AND THEN I WILL HAVE THAT PLEASURE.



YOU'VE GOT TWELVE HOURS, MR. CRANE. ALL BY MY, TO RUN AND WIDE IN THE JUNGLE. YOU'VE MADE YOURSELF? I AM A SPORTSMAN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU A SPORTS BY CRANE!



TOMORROW, WHEN THE SUN RISES, I WILL HUNT YOU DOWN IN THE JUNGLE WITH A CROSS-BOW! THAT WILL GIVE YOU A SPORTS CRANE! IT WILL BE YOUR WIFE AGAINST ME!



HE WAS CRANE, COMPLETELY COMPLETELY? I HAD NO CHOICE. I STUMBLED OUT OF THAT MAN HOUSE AND PLUNGED INTO THE FOREST! IT WAS TOO HORRIBLE TO BELIEVE! I WAS GOING TO BE HUNTED LIKE A HARE! IN THE JUNGLE I LOOKED ABOUT ME, I CALLED DOWN AND TOOK MY BEARING. I WISH I HAD TO BE CALM. EVERY WOMAN CRANE!



WHAT IS IT I HAVE IN MY POCKET? I SEARCH THE LIGHTER, SEARCHED UNDER, AND... WHAT WAS... MY SLACK SHOES?

IT WAS NOTHING (MARY)? I SAID TO WORK MARY? I HESITATED DOWN TO THE BEACH TO SEE IF THERE WAS ANYTHING I COULD SALVAGE FROM THE PLACE!



EVERYTHING BROTHER ABOUT THERE ARE SOME BITS OF THE WILDERNESS FOOT LOCK, AND A PIECE OF CABLE!

I HITCHHIKED AN ANIMAL OF STONY BRANDED, AND LET THEM IN A MAN! I THEN REARRANGED A CROSS BOW FROM AN ALUMINUM SECTION. WITH MY SLACK SHOES, I CALLED CRANE CRANE INTO A GREAT LETTER, STAY!



IT'S ALL THE THE MY RIGHT IN THE CENTER OF THIS JUNGLE TRAIL!

BY THE WAY, MY MY WAS ONLY MY HANDS WITH BLESSING AND MY WIFE ONLY ALICE FROM THE DISTRICT! I SEARCHED THE STAIRS IN THE PLACE OF THE HUT, AND THEN I STARTED SEARCHING FOR MY WIFE!



HOW UP? WHAT'S THAT? MARY! IT'S FOLLOWING BY TRAIL WITH ANIMAL!

BAY-UP! BAY-UP! BAY-UP!



BAY-UP

QUICKLY I JUMPED! BAY UP THE TRAIL! I THREW OUT THE CABLE I HAD POURED ON THE BEACH. I THEN STAYED UNDER A TREE STRONG I WAS SPRUNG FROM THE GRAB. BEHIND THE TRAIL, PROFOUND JOY!



I THEN SAW SOME ALONG THE TRAIL CAREFULLY BEHIND BY PITFALL.



MULLER LAMBS STAMPS FULL-TILT DOWN THE TRAIL WITH THE LOGS BRANDED HIM ALONG! HE NEVER SAW THE THIRST SLANT UP BY GRABBY STEELBIRD WAITING FOR HIS TRAIL!



MY WINE WAS SOME ITS WINE! THE SCOUT LEFT MULLER SHAKING BY HIS THROAT, MULLER'S BEATS INFLAMED SAMUEL'S LEGS FOR THE HILL... HE WAS BAYUP!



MY LAST THING WAS BY PITFALL, BEHIND ON THE TRAIL UP HEAD OF THE COURT.



THE HUNTER
CLIMBED UPON
ON INTO THE
NET! BUT THE
GUY SAW THE
GUY AND THE
GUY... HE
WAS LIKE AN
EAGLE! HE
SPOTTED MY
TRAP... JUST
AS HE WAS
DOWN MY STEEL
WIRE! BUT YOU
LATE TO STOP
THE GUY...



OH! BOSS! TOO
LATE TO SAVE
THEM!

A HELL... WITH
SHARP STAKES!
NOT VERY GOOD!
I WILL TRAVEL,
EASIER WITHOUT
THOSE STUNNING
SHARPER SOUND!



YI-KI
YAPE!

MY GUY IS CLEVERER THAN
I EXPECTED! HE
THIS GUY MUCH MORE
COURAGE!



THE GUY WAS BLISSFUL
THROUGH THE FOREST HE HAS
LEFT A TRAIL OF BROWN
BLADES OF GRASS AND TWIG!



I HADN'T FORGOTTEN TO
STAY AT THE SAME TIME AS THE
GUY, WITH MY OWN PROUD
FOLLOWED BY TRAIL, DIRECTLY
TOWARD MY OWN PLACE.



STRONG
AT ME HE
DARE! I
THINK HE
DARE HE
WAS GIVE
TO THE HILL
HIS FEEL
MORE GOOD,
AND HE
STARED
ME LIKE
A COON
ABOUT TO
STARE? I
COULDN'T
JUST LET
THESE I
WAS RUNNING
TO JAPAN
AND NOW...



--I
CHARGED
!!

WAS I HAVE FLUNG BY
PRETEND CHARGES ME... I
STAY BETWEEN HIS EYES...



THE NEXT FEW MOMENTS WERE FULL OF CONFUSION! SOMEONE FIRED A PISTOL, OFF TO MY RIGHT! THE COUNT NEVER GOT A CHANCE TO TRIGGER HIS CROSS-BOW! HE CLUTCHED HIS SHOULDER AND STUMBLED OFF INTO THE JUNGLE.



ALICE, YOU'RE ALIVE? YOU ESCAPED FROM THE PLANE?

I WAS WASHED UP, AS AND ALL, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ISLAND! WHO IS THAT GUY? WHY DID HE WANT TO KILL YOU?



MY SHOULDER! I HAVE BEEN HIT! WHERE DID THAT OTHER GUY COME FROM? NOW I AM THE HUNTED AND THEY ARE THE HUNTERS!



MOTHER OF ALBERTA? I HAVE STUMBLED INTO A JUNGLE WANTS NEST? I MUST GET AWAY! AAAHHH! THE PAIN!



WE HEARD HIM GRUNTING AROUND IN THE BUSH... AND THEN THERE WAS SILENCE! WHEN WE CAME UPON THE BODY, THE FEATURES WERE SWOLLER IN YOUNG RECOGNITION! HE HAD BEEN LITERALLY STUNG TO DEATH BY THE BLUE WANTS!

UGH! WHAT A MESS! LOOK OUT FOR THOSE WANTS!

COME ON! THERE MUST BE A BOAT AT HIS CASTLE! WE CAN MAKE IT TO THE MAINLAND BY SUNDOWN!



WE DID FIND A BOAT AND WE SAILED FROM THAT ISLAND OF HORROR! THE LAST THING WE SAW, AS IT PASSED OUT OF VIEW, WAS THE MENACING BLACK CASTLE OF THE LATE COUNT ALVARO CARDESA PERCHED HIGH ON THE CLIFF!

FUNNY THING, ALICE: HE HUNTED THE FASTEST ANIMALS, BUT IT TOOK A LOVELY INSECT TO POLISH HIM OFF!

CAN'T WE GET ANY MORE SPEED OUT OF THIS TUB? I WANTA GET HOME!



HORROR

THE VAULT OF
HORROR

ILLUSTRATED
SUSPENSE STORIES
BY WALTER JOSEF JOHNSON



FAMOUS 1950s EC COMICS!

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NO. 3
APR

THE VAULT OF



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HORROR

FEATURING THE NEW TREND IN MAGAZINES.

**ILLUSTRATED
SUSPENSE STORIES**
WE DARE YOU TO READ!



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AND WE ARE PLEASED TO BE ABLE TO OFFER TWO ISSUES FROM EAST COAST'S E C CLASSIC REPRINT LINE OF THE MID-70s. QUANTITY IS VERY LIMITED ON THESE. FIRST COME-FIRST SERVED ON THESE 32 PAGE COMICS!



RCP CRYPT #1



RCP CRYPT #2



RCP CRYPT #3



RCP CRYPT #4



RCP CRYPT #5



RCP CRYPT #6



RCP VAULT #1



RCP VAULT #2



RCP VAULT #3



RCP VAULT #4



RCP VAULT #5



EAST COAST #1



RCP HAUNT #1



RCP HAUNT #2



RCP HAUNT #3



RCP HAUNT #4



RCP HAUNT #5



EAST COAST #2

RCP CRYPT
#1 CRYPT #1 (1982)
#2 CRYPT #2 (1982)

RCP CRYPT
#3 CRYPT #3 (1982)
#4 CRYPT #4 (1982)

RCP CRYPT
#5 CRYPT #5 (1982)
#6 CRYPT #6 (1984)

RCP CRYPT
#7 CRYPT #7 (1984)
#8 CRYPT #8 (1984)

RCP CRYPT
#9 CRYPT #9 (1982)
#10 CRYPT #10 (1984)

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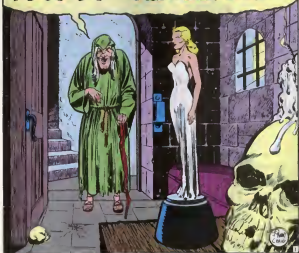
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THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELCOME, ONCE AGAIN, TO THE VAULT OF HORROR! I SEE WE HAVE MANY NEW READERS WITH US THIS TIME! HEH, HEH! I TRUST YOU HAVE PROPERLY PREPARED YOURSELVES! BY THAT I MEAN, YOU **HAVE** MADE SURE **ALL** THE DOORS AND WINDOWS ARE LOCKED, HAVEN'T YOU? FOR, THE TALE I AM ABOUT TO UNFOLD WILL TRULY BE AN INITIATION FOR YOU! YOU OTHER READERS WHO HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE... READY? HEH, HEH, HEH! GOOD! NOW, LIE BACK IN YOUR GRAVE AND GET A GOOD GRIP ON YOUR NERVES BECAUSE WE ARE ABOUT TO BEGIN THE STORY I CALL:

VOODOO VENGEANCE!



FOR THE PAST THIRTEEN YEARS, SALES STANBISH HAD LEFT HIS PALATIAL SUITE OF OFFICES AT PRECISELY FIVE PM, AND HAD WALKED ONE BLOCK TO THE GARAGE WHERE HE ALWAYS PARKED HIS CAR, BUT THIS DAY, HE LEFT EARLY.



NOW, THAT'S STRANGE! I'D SWEAR THIS SHOP WASN'T HERE BEFORE! I PASS HERE AT LEAST TWICE A DAY! FUNNY NOW I NEVER NOTICED IT!



HMM... ANTIQUES... DOBBIES! SOME RICE THINGS IN THE WINDOW! I THINK I'LL GO IN. MIGHT BE ABLE TO PICK UP SOMETHING NICE FOR BALLY!



I'M LOOKING FOR A GIFT TO GIVE MY WIFE, BUT IT'S SO DARK IN HERE I CAN'T SEE YOUR WARES! COULDN'T WE HAVE A BIT MORE LIGHT?



THE POWERS OF THE DARKNESS, SIR, ARE INFINITE! FIRST NOT, FOR I HAVE THAT WHICH YOU SEEK!

HERE, SIR! I THINK YOU WILL BE INTERESTED IN THIS... DOLL!



A DOLL? I'M AFRAID THAT'S NOT WHAT I HAD IN MIND! MAYBE YOU COULD SHOW ME SOMETHING ELSE!

IF YOU DO NOT CARE FOR THIS DOLL, SIR, PERHAPS YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ONE NOT SO ORDINARY! PERHAPS... A WOODEN DOLL? HMM?



A WOODEN DOLL? WHAT THE DEVIL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

A WAX DOLL THAT WILL BE THE EXACT DUPLICATE OF ANYONE YOU NAME! ONLY, OVER THIS DOLL I SHALL CAST A WOODEN SPELL! AND WHATSOEVER HAPPENS TO THE DOLL, SO SHALL IT ALSO HAPPEN TO THE PERSON IN WHOSE LIKENESS THE DOLL IS MADE!



NOT!

HEH! YOU DISBELIEVE! BUT IT'S *FREE!*
IN THE PAST I HAVE MADE MANY SUCH
DOLLS... FOR THOSE WHO MIGHT WISH
AN... HARM TO ANOTHER!

I... I
DON'T
BELIEVE
YOU'LL...
I THINK
O.K... I'LL
LEAVE!



BEFORE YOU GO, REMEMBER THIS!
IF EVEN YOU WISH TO DO SOMEONE
HARM... OR TO *KILL* SOMEONE... COME
TO ME! MY WOODEN DOLLS...

BT, STOP!
T... TAKE YOUR
HANDS FROM
ME!
HE!



HEH! HEH! HEH! HEH! REMEMBER WELL
MY WORDS, OR! *REMEMBER WELL!*
HEH! HEH! HEH! HEH! HEH! HEH!



HEH! HEH! OLD SALES CERTAINLY
LEFT *THEIR* IN A HURRY! HE HAD
BEEN GREATLY FRIGHTENED AND
ALL THE WAY HOME THE WIND
SHOPKEEPER'S WORDS ECHOED
AND RE-ECHOED THROUGH HIS
MIND! HEH! HEH! HEH!



CALLER ENTERED HIS HOUSE... AND
AS HE QUIETLY CLOSED THE DOOR,
HE HEARD HIS WIFE'S VOICE

SOUNDS LIKE SALLY IS TALKING
TO SOMEONE? SHE DOESN'T
EXPECT ME HOME THIS EARLY...
I'LL BREAK IN AND SURPRISE
THE SWEET, YOUNG THING!



BUT, SALLY, HOW
MUCH LONGER DO
WE HAVE TO WAIT?

DARLING, DON'T BE
SO IMPATIENT! FOR
ALL THE MONEY
WE'LL LEAVE ME
WHEN HE DIES, I
CAN AFFORD TO BE
HIDE TO THE O.C. BOAT!
-SIGNED A DICK-





SOME TIME LATER HE PARKED HIS CAR AND WALKED TOWARD HIS OFFICE. SUDDENLY, HE STOPPED...



THE NEXT MORNING, CALES BROUGHT THE SHOPKEEPER PHOTOGRAPHS OF BALLY AND WAS TOLD TO RETURN AT MID-NIGHT! AFTER A NERVE-WRACKING DAY, HE RETURNED TO THE SHOP AND WAS USHERED DOWN INTO THE CELLAR.

SIT THERE, BRY! YOU MUST BE PRESENT WHILE I PERFORM THE 'BLACK MANS' RITUAL WHICH WILL CHANGE THIS WAX FIGURE INTO A POKKOO DOLL!
YES... YES, OF COURSE! PLEASE HURRY, WON'T YOU... I FEEL QUITE NERVOUS!

THE SHOPKEEPER BEGAN THE BLACK MAGIC RITUAL. HE CHANTED WEIRD INCANTATIONS AND DANCED BEFORE THE DOLL... AND CALES SAT WATCHING



FOR WHAT SEEMED LIKE HOURS, THE RITUAL CONTINUED! AS THE SHOPKEEPER BECAME MORE AND MORE FRAGILE, CALES SAW MORE AND MORE FRIGHTENED HIS CLOTHES WERE WET WITH PERSPIRATION AND HIS HAND WAS IN TUMBLER.



CALES LEFT THE ANTIQUE SHOP AND WENT HOME HE SLEPT FITFULLY, BUT NEXT DAY HE AWOKE RESTED AND COMPOSED.

I MUST HAVE BEEN MAD! I... I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT REALLY HAPPENED! BUT THERE IS THE WAX DOLL TO PROVE IT! I... I WONDER IF WHAT HE SAID ABOUT IT IS TRUE! I... I MUST FIND OUT!



GOOD MORNING, CALES! OH, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL STATUE! AND... WHY, IT'S A... A STATUE OF ME!



DON'T TOUCH THAT!

WHY, CALES! THAT IS A STATUE OF ME, ISN'T IT?



OR... AN... YES! YES, I HAD THAT MADE! BUT... I DON'T WANT YOU TO TOUCH IT! IT... IT'S VERY DELICATE! PLEASE YOU DON'T TOUCH IT!

OF COURSE, CALES, YOU DEAR! IF IT WILL MAKE YOU HAPPY, I PROMISE NOT TO GO NEAR IT! YOU SWEET DARLING! YOU'RE NOT ANGRY WITH ME, ARE YOU DEAR?

OH, SALLY! SALLY, HOW CAN YOU SAY THOSE THINGS WHEN YOU DON'T MEAN THEM? HOW CAN YOU LIE TO ME LIKE THAT?

NO, NO, SALLY, I'M NOT ANGRY.



SUDDENLY, IT WAS OVER.

HERE, MR. IS YOUR DOLL? REMEMBER... WHAT SOEVER HAPPENS TO THE DOLL, SO SHALL IT ALSO HAPPEN TO THE PERSON IN WHOSE LIKENESS THE DOLL WAS MADE!

I... I UNDERSTAND! HERE... HERE IS YOUR FEE! I... I WANT... T... TO GO... HOME NOW!



THAT'S GOOD! DEAR, THERE'S THE PHONE! I'LL SET IT!

ALL RIGHT, SALLY! I'LL JUST PUT THE STATUE UP HERE ON THE SHELF... OUT OF BAWB'S WAY!





POOR CALES! HE DESERVED HURTING SALLY BECAUSE HE STILL LOVED HER! BUT HE WAS JEALOUS, AND IF THAT WAS THE ONLY WAY HE COULD KEEP HER, THAT WAS HOW IT WOULD BE! WELL, FRIENDS, SALLY RECOVERED RAPIDLY... AND ONE NIGHT...



CALES, I'M GOING TO VISIT AN OLD GIRL FRIEND! I AM, MAY BE A LITTLE LATE SO DON'T WAIT UP FOR ME!

JAY! SHE DOESN'T POOL ME! I HEARD HER MAKE A DATE WITH HER LOVER!



SHE MUST THINK I'M A FOOL! WELL, I'LL SHOW HER HOW FOOLISH I AM! I'LL JUST BREAK THE DOLL'S LEG THIS TIME! THERE!



SALLY! SALLY! ARE YOU HURT? WH...WHAT HAPPENED?

CALES! HELP ME! I FELL! MY...MY LEG! I...I THINK IT'S BROKEN!



ONCE AGAIN THE DOCTOR WAS SUMMONED. SALLY'S LEG HAD BEEN BROKEN AND SHE HAD TO REMAIN IN BED FOR A LONG WHILE. HEL, HEH! CALES WAS VERY HAPPY! BUT IT DIDN'T LAST FOREVER! SALLY BECAME WELL.

OH, DARLING, I KNOW IT'S BEEN SUCH A LONG TIME! BUT I COULDN'T HELP IT! CALES WOULDN'T LEAVE ME FOR A MINUTE! HE'S SUCH A PEST... YES, SON, I'LL MEET YOU TOMORROW! GOOD-BYE, DARLING.

SALLY.



CALES! WH...? WH...I...I THOUGHT YOU WERE OUT!

DON'T PRETEND, DEAR! I KNOW WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON. OH, BUT... BUT I CAN'T BE ANGRY WITH YOU! SALLY, PLEASE... I LOVE YOU.



WHY, YOU OLD FOOL! YOU BEEN SPYING ON ME. THAT'S WHAT! SPYING ON ME!

SALLY, PLEASE, DON'T! I'VE GIVEN YOU EVERYTHING! I'M SO OF YOU... LEAVE THAT MAN! I CAN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER! PLEASE, DARLING, PLEASE! YOU LOVED ME ONCE.





LOVED YOU! HA! I ONLY MARRIED YOU FOR YOUR MONEY! YOU OLD BITCH!! I CAN'T STAND YOU!

SALLY... PLEASE! DON'T... DON'T SAY THAT! **OUCH!**



I HATE YOU! I HATE YOU! YOU AND YOUR MONEY! SOMETIME I'LL SHOW YOU!

SALLY! NO! DON'T TOUCH THE DOLL! DON'T!



NO! SALLY! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING!

His face contorted in stark terror, CALES COULD ONLY WATCH HELPLESSLY AS THE WAS MADE OF SALLY SAILED OVER HEAD AND STRUCK THE INNER WALL OF THE FIREPLACE...



THE PIECES FELL ON THE BURNING LOGS... THE LICKING FLAMES LEAPED AROUND THEM... AND THEY BEGAN TO MELT.



WELL, DEAR READERS, THAT WAS A **SMASHING** CLIMAX. WASN'T IT? TOO BAD SALLY WAS SUCH A **NOY-HEAD!** SHE REALLY **WENT TO PIECES** OVER HER **SMATTERED** ROMANCE! **HEW! HEW! HEW!** NOW THE POOR THING IS ALL **BROKEN UP!** YEP, OLD CALES FINALLY **MELTED!** SALLY'S COLD HEART IN ONE **BOGE-SQUAWK** SCENE.

DON'T **HEW! HEW! HEW!** NOW THAT YOU'RE **SHRUNK UP** TO MY TALKS, **FIXE** YOURSELF TO-**BETTER!** AND READ ON! **HEW! HEW!** READ ON!



THE
END



THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Mr Vault-Keeper,

I would very much like it if you would send me a picture of your stinky self. I always read your comics on the bus ride home because I'm the last one off. The tale I liked best is "The Mask of Horror" in [RCP VAULT #6]. I only have two books. And I also like to draw pictures of the three storytellers, The Old Witch, The Crypt-Keeper and my favorite one, The Vault-Keeper.

Jesse Ryan Deering
Omer, MI

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I just wanted to ask for your picture, but as long as I am here I guess I'll tell you some things, like my fave mag is yours. I just recently got a subscription to all of the horror mags. My fave story is "The Mask of Horror" [in RCP VAULT #5].

Alan
Beethaft, IL

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I love your comics. I am your biggest fan. I have The VAULT OF HORROR 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 & 10. Did you ever think about getting your own show like "Tales from the Crypt?" It would be really cool if you did. Could you send me an autograph?

Staise Caroleo
Staten Island, NY

See there, HBO! My picture they want, my autograph they want! Amicus that I was star-material. I'll even pay for the puppet-rod implants [CK says they're tax deductible]!

—VK

Dear VK,

I just want to say that EC comics are the best. I buy every issue. My favorite tale is from [RCP VAULT #3], "Graft in Concrete," another favorite is from [RCP CRYPT #5] "Squash...Anyone?" There's a certain tale I've been dying to read, could you tell me what upcoming issue it will be in, or if there is one? It's called "Dead Wall."

Billy Ray Price
Meridian, MS

"Dead Wall" appeared in VAULT OF HORROR #23, which will be our VAULT #12, and I told the tale, so you know it's good! If

you can't wait, it's also in Gladstone's VAULT #4 (see our ad elsewhere this ish). So, if you're dying to read it, you can choose between a slow death or a fast one. Decisions, decisions. Squash? —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I could remember back when I saw this movie about this girl who would draw monsters and they would come to life and do what her drawing showed. Since then I love anything to do with horror. I would see many movies and watch many, many horror shows on TV. One day I went to my local newsstand and noticed a comic book that said VAULT OF HORROR. I picked it up and looked at it. It was worth every penny. I wanted to read it so bad, but when I got home I had to cut the grass. The book was on my mind during the 1 1/2 hour period. It soon was dark which made a perfect environment. I had my soda pop and chips ready as I read. It was great!

I have been doing my own comic books. Although my drawing ability is not yet perfect, nor my tales either, when I'm down I read some CRYPTs and VAULTs.

John Hempstead, age 17
Stuffers, OH

What a charming scene of domestic life, what a typical, Theodores Cleaver picture of chores, snacks & delayed pleasure. . .

How disgusting! This is 90s, kiddo; immediate gratification and hedonistic pleasure up to your ears! My kinda town!

—VK

[Don't let VK discourage you, John. Sounds great to us!]

Dear Vault-Keeper,

What's up? I was reading your issue #2, and the stories are so wild. They keep you in suspense through the whole story. Some are switched around, you think someone did it, and the other person really did it. I like the way you do that. I love reading the comics at night. Keep it up!

Rich Arneo
Kankakee, IL

Hey, Rich, I consider it a vote of confidence that, altho you don't know what I've got up, you want me to keep it there!

—VK

The tingling air and the gleaming snow-capped peaks of the Carpathian mountains attract vacationers from all over the world! Trudging up the flank of the Gragghorn is a little group of climbers...



From a little village in the southern part of Transylvania... *Walter Zerkel*...



And from America, honeymooning in this romantic setting... *Alvin and Edna Farnum*...



And the English brothers... students, enjoying their summer freedom from classes at Oxford... *Reggie and Eric Smythe*...



THESE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO WILL FOLLOW THEIR BRIZZLED GUIDE, THE ROUMANIAN *JAN BODZELA*, INTO THE ADVENTURE AND EXCITEMENT THEY SEEK! THEY KNOW THEY FACE *DANGER*, BUT HOW CAN THEY KNOW OF THE *HORROR* THEY WILL MEET WHEN *TERROR STRIKES* IN THE FORM OF A...







WHA...WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU CERTAINLY SCARED ME!

YOU THINK I'M AN OLD FOOL... BUT I MUST TAKE PRECAUTIONS!



SILVER CROSSES? ONE FOR EACH WINDOW, AND ONE FOR EACH OF US TO WEAR? HERE? IT IS ALL THAT WILL PROTECT YOU!



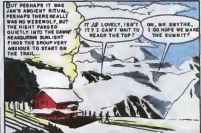
AND THESE... FOR THE DOORS! THE WOLF BREATH BLOOMS THIS TIME OF YEAR, AND THE WERE-WOLVES HOWL WHEN THEY SMELL IT! THIS WILL KEEP HIM AWAY!

BARLIG! IF ANYONE'S MAD AROUND HERE, IT'S YOU! THIS MEDICAL STUFF IS STUPID! I JUST WON'T HEAR ANYONE! GOOD-NIGHT!

BUT JAN WOOLA WAS BARY... AND WHILE THE OTHERS SLEPT HE SILENTLY STOOD GUARD.



TODAY'S NIGHT THERE WILL BE A FULL MOON! THEN THE DARKER THING WILL SURELY ASSURE IT'S HORRIBLE FORM!



BUT PERHAPS IT WAS JAN'S ABSENT MIND. PERHAPS THERE REALLY WAS NO WEREWOLF, BUT THE NIGHT PASSES QUIETLY INTO THE DAWN REASSURING SUNLIGHT FINDS THE GROUP VERY ANXIOUS TO START ON THE TRAIL...

IT IS LOVELY, ISN'T IT? I CAN'T WAIT TO REACH THE TOP!

OH, MR. SMITH, I DO HOPE WE MAKE THE SUMMIT!

UP THE WEST SLOPE OF THE IMPOSING TOWERS OF STONE? CLOSER, CLOSER TO... WHAT...?



LISTEN, OLD MAN, YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T TELL THOSE SILLY OLD STORIES, YOU WISHT SCARE MR. FASHUM?

TRUE? BECAUSE THE COMING NIGHT? AT THE TIME OF THE FULL MOON, THE WEREWOLF WILL STALK INNOCENT VICTIMS FOR HIS **PRIMITIVE PLEASURES!**



SH-SH? HERE ARE THE OTHERS? FORGET THOSE HORROR TALES FOR AWHILE, WHAT SAY?

YOU WILL SEE... **YOU WILL SEE!** BUT NOW, IT IS TIME TO MAKE CAMP FOR THE NIGHT!

THE MOON APPEARS IN THE DARKENING SKY AS THE CLIMBERS EAT THEIR SUPPER... UNWARE OF IMPENDING HORROR.



LOOK HOW HIS EYES SHINE! THE MOON IS REDDISH AND HIS EYES TURN RED! IT'S THE FIRST SIGN... WE MUST WATCH HIM CAREFULLY!

RED EYES! YOU'RE A CARD!

YOU CERTAINLY HAVE AN IMAGINATION! WHY, IT'S JUST THE REFLECTOR OF THE FLAMES!



HER HAND! HE LOOKS AT HER HAND AND SEES THE SIGN OF THE *PESTIFERAN* VISIBLE ONLY TO HIM! *JAN* WILL BE HIS FIRST VICTIM! WE MUST SAVE HER!

OH, YOU'RE REALLY FURRY, YOU KNOW!



BUT OLD *JAN*'S WARNINGS ARE IGNORED! THE CLIMBERS RETURN TO THEIR TENTS AND ALL IS QUIET... FOR AWHILE! THEN, SCEDDOW!



WHA A SCREAM!



WHAT HIT? MRS. *PARRIN*!

SHE'S GONE! THAT SCREAM... WE MUST FIND HER!



LET'S GO. WE CAN'T WASTE TIME!

WE'RE WITH YOU, *ERIC*!



BUT EVERYBODY'S NOT HERE! WHERE IS *FORAM*? WHERE IS HE?



THE LOATHSOME BEAST
LED THEM STEALTHILY
ON, SKULKING IN THE
SHADOWS HERE... DART-
ING INTO THE MOON-
LIGHT THERE! HE
ENRAGED THE HUNTERS,
AND LED THEM UP...UP.



THERE
HE IS!
AFTER
HIM!

I SEE HIM!
AT THE TOP!

LET ME
AT HIM!



I CAN'T SHOOT!
FARRUM... GET OUT
OF THE WAY!

YOU FLYIN'
BEAST? I'LL KILL
YOU!



YOU GOT HIM?
NICE GOING, JAM?

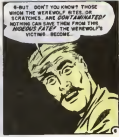
IS ANYONE HURT?
FARRUM... SMYHE!
YOU ALL RIGHT?



IT'S NOT SERIOUS,
JAM. LUCKILY I JUST
MY ARM. HE BIT
ME!

I JUST GOT A
SCRAFFORY! YOU
GOT HIM JUST
IN TIME!

MY LEG THOSE
SHARP CLAWS! BUT
IT'S NOT BAD!



8-BUT... DON'T YOU KNOW! THOSE
WHEN THE WEREWOLF BITES OR
SCRATCHES, ARE *CONTAMINATED!*
NOTHING CAN SAVE THEM FROM THIS
NOXIOUS FATE! THE WEREWOLF'S
VICTIMS... BECOME.

WEREWOLVES!



THE
END

THEY LAY IN THEIR COFFINS, THE QUIET DEAD OF OLD AND HAUGHTY CAPE COLONY. ON THEIR BONEY FINGERS THEY WORE THEIR RINGS, AND JEWELS SPARKLED AROUND THEIR WITHERED NECKS AND ARMS. SEEKING THIS FORGOTTEN LOOT CAME ABNER TUCKER... MERCILESS TO ANYTHING THAT STOOD IN HIS PATH... FORGETTING IN HIS GREED... THAT...

RATS HAVE SHARP TEETH!



ABNER TUCKER WAS THE LOCAL HISTORIAN OF BLUE-BLOODED CAPE COLONY. HE KNEW THE ANCESTRY OF EVERY MAN AND WOMAN IN TOWN. HE ALSO KNEW... OTHER THINGS...

THE BOOK SAID... SHE WAS BURIED... WHILE WEARING ALL HER WEDDING JEWELS?



SUDDENLY, SHRILLY IN THE NIGHT'S SILENCE, ABNER TUCKER SCREAMED:

AAAAGGGH!



JUST A RAT? THEY'VE WORCOMBED THIS PLACE WITH THEIR BURROWS AND HOLETS? WHENEW... SURE SAVED ME A START! I... I THOUGHT SHE WAS STIRRING IN THERE... SITTING UP!



ANN... THERE SHE IS! THE LOVELY MISS LADY DEAN... WITH ALL HER EMERALDS... HER EMERALDS... ? MY EMERALDS, NOW!



AND HERE THEY ARE... JUST AS THAT OLD HISTORY I FOUND SAID? ALL EMERALDS, ALL RIGHT! A FORTUNE IN JEWELS! ALL MINE... JUST LIKE THE REST OF THE THINGS THIS GRAVEYARD HOLDS!



YES, THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING! IN MY ROLE AS HISTORIAN I HAVE ACCESS TO OLD RECORDS... OLD BURIAL RECORDS AND DIARIES! THIS WHOLE GRAVEYARD MUST HOLD HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF VALUABLES! SOMEDAY I'LL BE RICH!



WHA... WHAT WAS THAT? I HEARD SOMETHING... GULP! A... A POLICEMAN!



IF... IF ANYONE EVER CATCH ME DIGGING UP THOSE GRAVES, I'GOD TO JAIL! AND I CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN! I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY FROM UP SOME WAY... TONS OF THOSE GRAVES WITHOUT RISK OF DISCOVERY!



SOME AFTERNOONS LATER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE OFFICE OF THE COMMITTEE IN CHARGE OF THE COLONIAL GRAVEYARD

AGREE, THE COMMITTEE HAS PASSED ON YOUR APPLICATION FOR THE VACANT POST OF CARETAKER? YOU HAVE THE JOB? THANK YOU, SIR. THANK YOU.



AMBER TUCKER MADE HIS HOME IN THE OLD BARRACKS WHICH WAS NOW A PART OF THE "GRAVE-YARD" AT NIGHT HE POKED OVER OLD PLANS AND BLUEPRINTS.



ACCORDING TO THIS OLD PRINT, THERE'S A SECRET ENTRANCE FROM THE CELLAR INTO THE TUNNELS BENEATH THE GRAVEYARD!



THEY USED THOSE TUNNELS DURING THE REVOLUTION - TO SNEAKLE SPIES IN AND OUT - THEN DURING THE CIVIL WAR TO HELP SLAVES ESCAPE UP NORTH.



THIS MUST BE...
SCYTHAAAAA!



THOSE RATS GAVE ME A SCARE! BLASTED THINGS! I'LL HAVE TO GET RID OF THEM... SOMEHOW!



DOWN, DOWN A WOODEN STAIRCASE BOTTED WITHAGE AND INTO THE EARTHEN TUNNELS WENT AMBER TUCKER AND EVERYWHERE THAT HE WENT...



"RATS" HUNDREDS OF THEM - THOUSANDS! THEY'RE ALL OVER THE PLACE!



THERE'S A GRAVE RIGHT ABOUT HERE! I'LL JUST GET IN A LITTLE WORK TONIGHT - HAVE EVERYTHING READY FOR TOMORROW!



AND AS AMBER TUCKER WORKED AND SWEATED, CRUEL, LITTLE SLITTYRAT EYES WATCHED HIS EVERY MOVE FOR AMBER TUCKER WAS AN ENEMY... TO THE RATS!

I OUGHT TO BE INSIDE THE COFFIN-GRABBER FAIRLY SOON...

AT LAST! HERE IT IS! THE GRAVE OF RICH OLD MARCUS LEE! HE WAS BURIED WITH HIS *MONEY*! STILL ON HIM!



THERE! THERE'S THE BELT... STUFFED WITH GOOD GOLD COINS! HOW HEAVY IT FEELS! BUT THAT'S BECAUSE... GOLD IS HEAVY!



NICE YELLOW GOLD! ENOUGH HERE TO MAKE ME RICH! BUT THERE'S MORE TO COME! I'LL LEAVE THE BELT HERE TONIGHT! I MUST HAVE A SAFE HIDING PLACE FOR IT... UP ABOVE!



ALL THE NEXT DAY, ASHER TUCKER WENT ABOUT HIS TASKS WITH IMPATIENCE THAT NIGHT, AS HE WENT ALONG THE TUNNEL AND INTO THE RIFLED GRAVE OF MARCUS LEE.



THE MORE I BELT *SOME*!



THESE *HATS* TOOK IT! I CAN SEE THE MARKS... WHERE THEY DRAGGED IT ALONG THE TUNNEL! THEY *STOLE MY MONEY!*



STEAL MY THINGS, WILL YOU? I'LL TEACH YOU, YOU FILTHY LITTLE BEASTS! IT'S *WASP* YOU WANT, IS IT? ALL RIGHT! FROM NOW ON... YOU *ALL DIE!*



YOU DIE! HA! HA! HA! YOU HEAR ME, YOU YOUTHINGST! YOU DIE! *ROBOT* STEALS ASHER TUCKER'S GOLD FROM HIM!



NEXT DAY, ABNER TUCKER WORKED LIKE A MAN POSSESSED HE BUILT TRAPS.

THEY'LL LEARN WHAT A MAN CAN DO! THEY'LL LEARN BY STUFF!



HE POISONED MEAT, AND PUT IT INTO TINY CRACKS. AT NIGHT HE WALKED THE TUNNELS, DROPPING THE DEADLY FOOD.

HA! HA! HA! COME AND GET IT. YOUR DINNER! HA! HA! SCARED! DINNER



DAY AFTER DAY, RATS DIED BY THE HUNDREDS! NOW, WHEN HE WALKED THE TUNNELS, THERE WERE FEW OF THEM TO BE SEEN! BUT ABNER TUCKER WAS NOT SATISFIED.

THERE! THIS WISE BARRIER WILL KEEP THEM DOWN AT THE FAR END OF THE TUNNEL. NOW I CAN GET ALL I WANT... AND THEY CAN'T GET AT MY TREASURES!



AND? TRY TO STEAL MY GOLD? TRY! TRY! YOU'RE PISSED IN THERE!



NOW I CAN REALLY CONCENTRATE ON MY JOB! THE NEXT GRAVE TO BE OPENED IS THAT OF SAFFER PONDLEBY. HE WAS AN OLD WICKER... WHO HAD HIS FORTUNE BURIED WITH HIM!



MY GRAVE IS FURTHER THAN I THOUGHT! I'LL HAVE TO SHORE UP THIS TUNNEL WITH WOODEN BEAMS, TO KEEP IT FROM COLLAPSING!

BY DAY, ABNER TUCKER PORED OVER THE OLD GRAVEYARD PLANS AS HE ATE HIS LUNCH.



AFTER I OPEN PONDLEBY'S GRAVE, I'LL GET TO WORK ON YOUR BORN JACKSON! HE HAD A COLLECTION OF GOLD BARS THAT WAS BURIED WITH HIM.

AS HE ATE, ARNER TUCKER WAS BLISSFULLY UNAWARE THAT HIS ENEMIES, THE MATS, WERE FURIOUSLY WORKING AWAY BELOW HIM.



ONCE FREE, THE ROBERTS RAGED FOR THE TUNNEL ON WHICH ARNER TUCKER HAD SO FURIOUSLY LANCED THEIR QUICK WHITE TEETH GRAWED AT THE WOODEN BEAMS THAT SUPPORTED THE WALLS OF THE PODDLE BY TUNNEL.



NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, ARNER TUCKER WORKED AWAY IN THE DIM LIGHT. HE NEVER NOTICED THE SLOW, STEADY WEARINGS OF THE BEAMS UNTIL ONE NIGHT A WEEK LATER.

AT LAST "LOOK AT HIS GOLD! HIS BROTHERS' HIS JEWELS! THERE MUST BE CLOSE TO FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS IN HERE!"



SO EXCITED WAS HE THAT HE DID NOT HEAR THE SHARP CLIPPING OF GRAWING TEETH.



A BEAM WEATHERED BY THE GRAWING AND THE WEIGHT OF UNTOLD TONS OF DIRT... CRACKED! ANOTHER CRACKED!



WHAT'S THAT? WHAT IS IT? OHHHH! THE TUNNEL IS... COLLAPSING IN!

THE MATS "THEY'VE GRAWED AWAY THE TUNNEL SUPPORTS" MY SHOVEL IS USELESS.



NO... NO... I'LL BE... BURIED ALIVE... DOWN HERE... I CAN'T GO OUT WITH MY BARE HANDS... NO... NO... THE AIR WON'T LAST LONG... I'LL BE SUFFOCATED... BURIED!



TWENTY FEET ABOVE THE GRAVEYARD WAS QUIET... ONLY THE DEAD... AND THE MATS... WERE THERE TO ENJOY THE MOONLIGHT...



Dear V-K,

I like the idea of having hosts for EC comics. In order I like the Crypt-Keeper because he's very funny. Next is the Old Witch who always seems to be stirring up something new in HAUNT. Third, I like YOU because you're such a nice guy.

Scott Kirkpatrick
Cincinnati, OH

I must be slipping.

—VK

Dear CK, VK, CW,

Recently I read one of your horror comics. I enjoyed it very much. My family went on a trip to Muskegon; we stopped at a gas station, and I bought three of your comics. My whole family likes your comics. I've told my friends about your comics and they are starting to collect them. I've been so delighted with your comics that I thought I'd write.

Tina Monte
Alpena, MI

*Fess up, you're...the Addams family! —VK

Dear Russ,

In the past I have purchased six of your EC Libraries. But the one-time outlays of cash for these tremendous hardback books has prevented me from doing so recently. I never bought any of the combination reprint issues. I wanted them in order and not mixed together. You must have read my mind.

Your new format is perfect for me. I like the chronological printing, the paper format and lower price, and I like the quarterly frequency.

I would also like to purchase the Pre-Trend ECs. None of these have ever been reprinted in any format that I know of. I also would be purchasing the post-code issues if you reprint them in this format. Thanks for a super product.

Matt Sturm
Cincinnati, OH

Russ says to say if you DO decide you want hardbacks (ouch, ouch), he's published the entire New Direction (post-code, OUCH) line, and for a short time only you can order the 3-set Pre-Trend books (WAR AGAINST CRIME; CRIME PATROL; SADDLE JUSTICE; GUNFIGHTER; SADDLE ROMANCES; A MOON, A GIRL...ROMANCE and MODERN LOVE) at a special prepublication price; write or call for details (EE-Yow! Now, leggo the erm, Russ, you'll break it. Again.) —VK

Dear GhoulUnatics,

I just wanted to let you know that all the #1 issues of the 32-page ECs arrived in perfect condition. Your packing & shipping department did a careful job, and obviously cares about the condition the comics arrive in.

Although the #1s were ordered as back issues, I did finally order a premium subscription by phone. I don't have a car, so the cost of a subscription is probably equal to or less than round trip bus fare to a comic shop 12 times a year, especially now that recent route changes mean that it now takes 2 buses to get to the nearest comic shop. Also, the shop relegates what few ECs they have to the rotating rack. You have heard this before, but my comic shop copy of TWO-FISTED looks like somebody drove a nail through it! All the comic shop people told me how mutilated the comics would be if I subscribed, while theirs would be in perfect condition. It looks like it's the other way around! I now know that if they come from you via a premium subscription, they'll be in perfect condition. I chose the \$75 Option #3. As long as they come in a box is all that matters to me. I always thought Calumet was a brand of baking powder.

I couldn't help but notice similarities between "Portrait in Wax" in VAULT #1 and the 1950s Vincent Price movie "House of Wax." Not the plot, but specific details, like corpses disguised as wax statues and a man who covered his scarred face with a wax mask. I wonder if it was just coincidence, or if the writers of the film "borrowed" these ideas from VK.

I'll consider ordering some of the color prints of EC covers. I'm assuming they're the color plates from the hardcover EC Library. I haven't decided yet, because it would take some of the surprise out of getting the comics if I saw all the covers at once.

That's about all I have to say. Your main requests in the letter pages are "Subscribe!" and "We Want Letters!", and now I've done both.

Bobby Birkert

CK mentioned the vide-worthy Vincent in his leap in CRYPT #3, now's my turn! Before we crow too loudly about beating Hollywood to the punch, bear in mind "House of Wax" was a remake of 1933's "Mystery of the Wax Museum," directed by Michael Curtiz. But, to compare, here's the peerless Price as "House"'s Henry Jarrod being unmasked alongside Craig's Juice Vendetta in the same circumstance, from "Portrait in Wax!" in VAULT #1.



While we're on the subject, I've been catching up on movies released since my forced retirement, and can recommend the

work of Curtis Harrington, specifically in this connection his "Games" of 1947 starring the "Diabolique"—a! Simone Signoret (Woo-wool).

For the 3rd part of a Prize triple-play, see OW's local in HAUNT #3 in about 30 days!

You are right, the EC covers are "overruns" from the ubiquitous EC Library. And, they're so cheap! I mean, they're so reasonably priced! Suitable for wallpapering your own little vault! Call or write for info. —VK

Dear V-K,

I don't see why people compare your stories to the Crypt-Keeper's stories. They are all by the exact same artists and writers.

I have a question: If VAULT #1 actually printed the FIRST issue of VAULT, why does the Vault-Keeper say, "Ah, we meet AGAIN"? Also, when did Gheasty join EC?

Oliver Buckel
Erie, PA

Why, Oliver, the tale is in the TELLING! And I'm the top tale-teller!

Truth be told, I told two tales (by the tentorial! By golly, I'm getting tongue-tied!) in the last few Pre-Trend comics; specifically, in WAR AGAINST CRIME #10 & #11. You can see those seen in Russ' Pre-Trend hardbacks (see above).

"Gheasty" Graham Ingels' 1st EC work was (heily "Smokin' Sla Guns" in WAR AGAINST CRIME #1 (1948). He did about 20 stories for the Pre-Trends. Of course, he was just plain Graham then. It wasn't till we Ghoulunatics got hold of him he turned "Gheasty!" —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

Why don't you go to HBO and get your own show like the Crypt-Keeper? You might be good enough! You aren't my favorite host, but I have no favorite! I write to all hosts so don't worry. Are you friends with the Crypt-Keeper? I've always wondered about that.

Ricky Metz
Chicago, IL

MIGHT be? Huh!

—VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I subscribed to CRYPT a few months ago and VAULT just recently. I think your mag is the best. I am going to subscribe to HAUNT, too, but I think I'll still like VAULT the best.

I read your mag all the time. I love the artwork, especially by Graham Ingels. I am his biggest fan. Speaking of fan, I would like to know if there are any fan clubs going to start. In VAULT #2 I read Glenn Weinrich's letter in VK's Corner asking

about a Fan-Addict Club. You asked someone to step forward. I would like to know if Glenn would like to help me start one. If you would, Glenn, write to me.

Kevin Spann
6415 Cardinal
Little Rock, AR 72204

See also the local in CRYPT #3, already in release. —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I love your gruesome tales. I've read only one issue of VAULT, I know I'll buy more. It's the best comic I've ever read. Although I'm not the best artist in the world, I drew a picture, I hope you will like it.



Anthony Bell
Plainfield, IN

I like it! I like it! From sharp minds come...sharp knives! —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I want to know who wrote EC's stories in CRYPT, VAULT, and HAUNT. Was it the artists? At first, when I started collecting, I thought it was. Now, I am not sure.

I am your #1 fan.

Dan Knut
Philadelphia, PA

At least MY own little #1 fan!

The fact is, we're not set up to accurately list the authors of the EC stories, but we can easily (using the von Bernowitz "Checklist") list the artists. —VK

Also available this month are WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-PISTED TALES. Watch for HAUNT, WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY and CRIME next month. Don't forget CRYPT, WEIRD SCIENCE and SHOCK. Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic for details.) Each issue is \$1.50 each plus \$2.00 per order for s&h (\$3.00 outside US).

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THIS COMIC REPRINTS
VAULT OF HORROR #114 (32, AUG 1952)

"Woods' Vengeance"
"Wardwolf"
"They Have Sharp Teeth"
"The Strange Couple"

Johnny Craig
Wally Wood
Graham Ingels
Al Feldstein



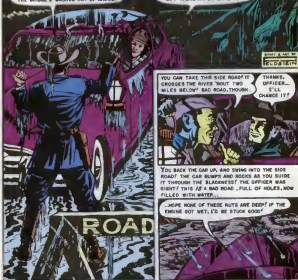
THIS TALE IS ONE OF MY FAVORITES! I CALL IT...

THE STRANGE COUPLE!

YOU HAVE BEEN DRIVING FOR TWO HOURS THROUGH THIS BLINDING DOWNPOUR! AT TIMES, YOU CAN HARDLY SEE THE ROAD AHEAD! HEADLIGHTS DON'T HELP! THEY ONLY REFLECT BACK FROM THE SHEETS OF DRIVING RAIN... GIVING THE EERIE EFFECT THAT YOU ARE FOLLOWING A SOLID WALL OF WATER! WAIT... THERE'S A LIGHT UP AHEAD! IT'S MOVING UP AND DOWN! IT... IT'S A MAN... STANDING IN THE ROAD... A STATE TROOPER... SIGNALING YOU TO STOP...

YOU'LL HAVE TO TURN BACK, MISTER!
THE BRIDGE'S WASHED OUT UP AHEAD!

BUT... I'VE GOT TO GET THROUGH!
ISN'T THERE AN OTHER WAY?



WALT & GAIL BY
ROSTEN

YOU CAN TAKE THE SIDE ROAD! IT
CROSSES THE RIVER 'BOUT TWO
MILES BELOW! BAD ROAD, THOUGH...

THANKS,
OFFICER...
I'LL
CHANGE IT!

YOU BACK THE CAR UP, AND SWING INTO THE SIDE
ROAD! THE CAR BUMPS AND ROCKS AS YOU SWIVE
IT THROUGH THE BLACKNESS! THE OFFICER WAS
RIGHT! THIS IS A BAD ROAD... FULL OF HOLES, NOW
 FILLED WITH WATER...

...HOPE NONE OF THESE RUTS ARE DEEP! IF THE
FRONT GOT WET, IT'D BE STUCK GOOD!

ROAD

YOU CONTINUE ON SPLASHES AND ROLLING, FOR WHAT SEEMS LIKE HOURS! YOU'RE TIRED NOW! THE STRAIN OF DRIVING IN THIS DREAFUL DOWNPOUR IS BEGINNING TO HAVE ITS EFFECT! SUDDENLY...



THE ENGINE HAS STALLED! THAT LAST OUCH YOU WENT THROUGH PROBABLY MET THE BARRIERS! YOU'RE STUCK NOW! STUCK OUT IN THIS GOD-FORSAKEN SPOT!

WELL, THERE'S NO USE TRYING TO WALK ANYWHERE! THE RAIN IS TOO HEAVY FOR THAT! ?



MIGHT AS WELL MAKE MYSELF COMFORTABLE! ... GOT TO WAIT FOR THE BEASTLY STORM TO STOP ... TIRED ANYWAY. SO-HUH - I'LL



SUDDENLY YOU GET BOLT UPRIGHT! A LIGHT SHINING THROUGH THE BLACK DOWNPOUR! FURST! YOU DON'T NOTICE IT BEFORE! MAYBE IT'S A HOUSE! MAYBE

PERHAPS THEY HAVE A *PROBE* ... NEED A MECHANIC TO FIX THE CAR!



YOU PULL YOUR COLLAR UP AROUND YOUR NECK, PULL YOUR HAT DOWN, AND MAKE A BREAK FOR THE HOUSE

I HOPE THEY CAN PUT ME UP FOR THE ... PART NIGHT! I'M ... PART *ROBBY*, TOO!



THE HOUSE IS OLD AND BURDOWN! THE BRUZZERS ARE BROKEN, AND ARE CLATTERING AGAINST THE WINDOWS! EY FINGERS SNIP YOUR SPIRE AS YOU STAND BEFORE THE BATTERED DOOR! THERE IS SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT THIS HOUSE ... SOMETHING FOREBODING ...

OWH ... BRUZZER ... THIS PLACE GIVES ME THE CREEPS!



YOU KNOW! THE HOLLOW BOOM ECHOS THROUGH THE INTERIOR ... AND HEAVY SLOW FOOTSTEPS APPROACH THE DOOR! THE MUSTY HINGES SQUEAK AND STRAIN AS THE DOOR THIRDS OPEN ...

GO AWAY GO AWAY FROM HERE!

BUT THE STORM ... I ...





YOU'RE FRIGHTENED! THE WOMAN HAS A WILD, ALMOST MANIACAL LOOK IN HER BLEAMING EYES! HER HOARSE WHISPER BURNS YOUR EARDRUMS...

YOU'RE NOT WANTED? IT'S DANGEROUS FOR YOU HERE! SO AWAY?

BUT MY CAR... IT'S STUCK DOWN THERE... I THOUGHT...



LET THE GENTLEMAN COME IN, NEPHEW! LET HIM COME IN! I WOULDN'T TURN AWAY A DOG ON A WENT LIKE THIS!

WHY... THANK YOU, SIR? I WAS WONDERING IF YOU COULD PUT ME UP...

OH, WHILE THERE'S STILL TIME...



YOU MUSTN'T MIND MY WIFE, SIR? SHE'S... NOT WELL?

Oh... I SEE?



THAT'S WHY WE LIVE OUT IN THIS DESERTED PLACE! I CAN KEEP MY EYE ON HER... TAKE CARE OF HER!

I... UNDERSTAND! DO YOU THINK I COULD... SET SOMETHING TO EAT?



OF COURSE! WAIT HERE! I'LL GO DOWN INTO THE WINE CELLAR... AND BRING UP A BOTTLE OF MY *BEST* VINTAGE!



YOU SIT DOWN! YOU LOOK AROUND! THE WOMAN IS COVERED IN THE CORNER! HER BEADY EYES FOLLOW THE MAN AS HE DISAPPEARS INTO THE CELLAR! THEN SHE RUSHES TO YOU... CLAWING AT YOUR ARM...

PLEASE! I SEE OF YOUR *GO!* YOU ARE IN GREAT DANGER HERE! MY HUSBAND! HE IS *IRREDEEMABLE!*

IRREDEEMABLE?



MY HUSBAND... IS A *VAMPIRE!* THAT IS WHY YOU *MUST* LEAVE! TRUST ME! THAT BOTTLE HE'S SETTING... IT'S ALMOST *EMPTY!* IT'S *NOT* WINE! IT'S *BLOOD!*

GOOD LORD! THE WOMAN IS *WILD!*

THE FOOTSTEPS ON THE CELLAR STAIRS WARN THE OLD WOMAN OF HER HUSBAND'S RETURN. AND SHE SLIPS INTO THE SHADOWS BEYOND THE FIREPLACE.



THE MAN PUTS THE BOTTLE ON THE TABLE... AND YOU STARE AT IT! IT IS ALMOST EMPTY, AND THE CONTENTS ARE A DEEP RED... **BLOOD RED.**



HE JUMPS UP HEAVY OF RAGE! HE BLINKS TO THE WOMAN WHO SITS HIDDEN IN THE DARKNESS.

YOU'VE BEEN TALKING! SO UPSTAIRS TO YOUR ROOM! SO AHEAD!

YES, FRED!



YOU CAN SEE THAT HE'S IRRITATED! HE RETURNS TO THE TABLE AND POURS A GLASS OF THE RED LIQUID FOR HIMSELF! HE DRINKS IT DOWN AND LICKS HIS LIPS! THEN HE LEANS TOWARD YOU.

I SEE THAT I MUST TELL YOU ABOUT MY WIFE! SHE IS **ORFANE!** HOPELESSLY ILL! BUT HER AFFLICTION IS WORSE THAN ANY FEAR COULD IMAGINE! MY WIFE IS A



BY FREEZING AGAIN CLOSE AROUND YOUR HEART AS THE MAN RELATES A STRANGE TALE!

WE HAD A DOG! ONE DAY, IT DIED! I TOOK THE POOR THING AND BURIED IT IN THE GARDEN BEHIND THE HOUSE! THAT NIGHT, I WAS AWAKENED BY THE SOUND OF A SPADE IN THE SOFT SANDS! I LOOKED OUT OF MY WINDOW



...IT WAS **MY WIFE!** SHE WAS DIGGING AT THE DOG'S GRAVE! I PUT ON MY BOOTS! I WENT DOWNSTAIRS! SHE WAS GONE WHEN I GOT TO THE GARDEN, BUT THE DOG'S CORPSE WAS STILL THERE... AND IT WAS **PARTIALLY DEVOURED!**



YOU SHUDDER! A FEELING OF PANIC SWEEPS OVER YOU! YOUR THROAT IS TIGHT AND DRY! THE MAN RISSES, TAKES THE BOTTLE AND BOBS DOWN INTO THE CELLAR ONCE MORE! SUDDENLY YOU HEAR FOOTSTEPS BEHIND YOU! YOU TURN.

HE KILLED THE DOG! HE DRANK ITS BLOOD! LOCK THE DOOR TO YOUR ROOM TONIGHT! I SEE YOU! LOCK THE DOOR... PROTECT YOURSELF. I WARN YOU!

I... I WILL!



SHE SCURRIES UP THE STAIRS AS THE MAN RETURNS!
HE HANDS YOU A KEY!
"THIS IS A KEY TO THE CLOSET IN YOUR ROOM! LOCK IT TONIGHT!
SHE CAN GET IN THAT WAY IF YOU DON'T COME... I WILL SHOW YOU YOUR ROOM!"

"YES!
I
I'M
COMING!"



HE OPENS THE DOOR TO A SMALL ROOM! THERE IS NO WINDOW... ONLY ONE OTHER DOOR! THE CLOSET!

"GOOD NIGHT, SIR!
REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU. LOCK THE CLOSET WITH THAT KEY!"

"YES... I WILL! I'LL REMEMBER!"



HE IS GONE, AND YOU ARE TERRIFIED! LORD, HOW YOU WISH YOU COULD RUN FROM THIS CURSED HOUSE... BUT THE RAIN... YOU CAN HEAR IT PATT-TERING ON THE ROOF ABOVE... WHERE CAN YOU GO...

"I'LL BARRICADE MYSELF IN!"



FIRST YOU LOCK THE CLOSET WITH THE KEY THE MAN GAVE YOU! THEN, YOU LOCK THE DOOR TO THE ROOM...

"THAT BUREAU LOOKS HEAVY ENOUGH!"



YOU PUSH THE HEAVY BUREAU UP AGAINST THE DOOR TO THE ROOM

"THAT DOESN'T DOO IT!
WE CAN'T MOVE THAT!"



AND SHOVE THE BED UP AGAINST THE CLOSET DOOR... IF I LIE ON THE BED, SHE WON'T BE ABLE TO PUSH IT OPEN!



NERVOUSLY, YOU LIE DOWN ON THE BED! YOU ARE TIRED... BUT YOU CAN'T NOT SLEEP! WHO CAN YOU BELIEVE? WHICH ONE IS TELLING THE TRUTH?

"MAY BE... MAY BE THIS IS ALL A HORRIBLE JOKE... THEY ARE PLAYING."



SURELY YOUR BLOOD FREEZES IN YOUR VEINS! YOU GET UP! A NOISE. FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE YOUR ROOM!



YOU TRY TO PEER INTO THE CLOSET THE DOOR... AGAIN



THEN... A THIN PENCIL STRIKE OF LIGHT FALLS ACROSS THE ROOM



SURE HORROR CLUTCHES AT YOUR POINING HEART. THE PANEL OPENS WIDER, WIDER... AND THEN



YOU BACK UP, BUT THERE'S NO PLACE TO GO! THE ROOM IS SMALL... THE DOORS BARRICADED... AND THE TWO OF THEM, THAT HORRIBLE COUPLE, ARE COMING AT YOU



YOU SCREAM LOUDLY WITH ALL THE STRENGTH YOU CAN MUSTER! YOU CLAW AGAINST THE WALL BEHIND YOU AND SCREAM



SUDDENLY THERE IS A BLINDING FLASH OF LIGHT AND YOU OPEN YOUR EYES...

GOOD LORD!



YOU ARE IN YOUR CAR... THE RAIN POURING ON THE METAL TOP... ECHOING IN YOUR EARS! YOU'RE WET WITH PERSPIRATION... AND SICK...

E... I MUST HAVE BEEN DREAMING!



YOU PRESS YOUR FOOT ON THE STARTER OF YOUR CAR! THERE IS NO SOUND!

... DEAD! THE WATER MUST HAVE SHORTED THE BATTERY!



YOU LOOK AROUND! A LIGHT... SHINING THROUGH THE DOWNPOUR! A HOUSE...

MAYBE THEY HAVE A PHONE! I COULD GET A MECHANIC.



YOU PULL YOUR COLLAR UP AROUND YOUR NECK, PULL YOUR HAT DOWN OVER YOUR EYES, AND BREAK FOR THE HOUSE...

IF THEY HAVE NO PHONE, AT LEAST THEY COULD PUT ME UP UNTIL MORNING!



THE HOUSE SEEMS STRANGELY FAMILIAR! RUN DOWN. CLATTERING SHUTTERS, BATTERED DOOR! ALMOST LIKE THE HOUSE IN THAT HORRIBLE NIGHTMARE YOU JUST HAD.

BAH! IT WAS ONLY A DREAM!



FOOTSTEPS, BLEM AND HEAVY, APPROACH IN ANSWER TO YOUR FRANTIC BANGING! THE DOOR SQUEAKS OPEN...

GO AWAY! GO AWAY FROM HERE... BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

LET THE GENTLEMAN COME IN, NEPHEW! I WOULDN'T TURN AWAY A DOG ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS...



ONLY A DREAM? WELL! THEN WHAT ARE YOU FRIGHTENED OF? GO ON! GO ON IN!



YOU, TOO, CAN PEP UP YOUR HUMDRUM
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HORROR



THE VAULT OF HORROR!



WELCOME, READERS... WELCOME TO THE VAULT OF HORROR! THIS TIME I HAVE A TALE FOR YOU THAT EVEN PUZZLES ME! STRETCH OUT COMFORTABLY, NOW... AND COVER YOURSELVES WITH DEEP BLACK GIRT TO KEEP WARM! I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO CATCH COOL FROM THIS DRIZZLE I CALL.....

HORROR HOUSE!



HOW LISTER, HENRY! EITHER YOU GET YOUR STORIES IN ON TIME OR YOU LOOK FOR ANOTHER PUBLISHER! THIS BUSINESS OF BEING LATE HAS GOT TO STOP!

OKAY, BOSS! GREAT, YOU'RE GREAT! BUT IT'S NOT MY FAULT! FRIENDS ARE ALWAYS BARRING IN CRIME... THROWING PARTIES... IN MY APARTMENT! I CAN'T GET RID OF THEM!



WELL, EITHER YOU GET RID OF THEM... OR I'LL GET RID OF YOU!

OKAY, BOSS! I PROMISE. I WON'T BE LATE AGAIN. I'LL OUTFIT THEM... SOMEHOW!

AT HOME AGAIN, HENRY DAMSON SITS AT HIS TYPEWRITER...

I HAVE A TERRIFIC PLOT FOR THIS NEXT HORROR STORY! ONLY I'M NOT INTERRUPTED—
AH! IF ALL! THERE'S THE DOORBELL!



HEYA, HENRY, OLD BOYT THOUGHT I'D BRING THE GANG OVER! HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A COUPLE OF DAYS!

OH, BOY! DON'T LET US WORRY YOU, HENRY, IF YOU'RE BUSY! YOU GO RIGHT AHEAD AND WORK, CHALLENGE!



HEY! WHERE'S YOUR LIQUOR, HENRY?

OH, I BET YOU SAY THAT TO ALL THE GIRLS...

THROW BACK THE RUB! I FEEL LIKE DANCING!

HENRY! YOU OLD MEANY! WHY HAVEN'T I SEEN MORE OF YOU?

LOOK, HENRY! I GOT A TERRIFIC STORY FOR YOU! THERE'S THIS GUY, SEE...

WELL, THAT DOES IT! I CAN'T TAKE ANYMORE OF THIS! IF THEY LIKE MY APARTMENT SO MUCH, THEY CAN ASK IT! I'LL JUST PACK UP MY CLOTHES AND TH REWRITER...AND LEAVE!



LEAVING SO SOON, FELLAH? CAN'T SAY I BLAME YOU! THE GUY WHO LIVES HERE SURE IS STINGY WITH HIS DRINKS!



SOME HOURS LATER...

I SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS LONG AGO! I'LL FIND SOME QUIET PLACE HERE IN THE COUNTRY WHERE I WON'T BE DISTURBED AND...HEY!



THAT HOUSE! IT'S PERFECT! JUST WHAT I NEED! WHY, I BET I COULD WRITE SERIOUS HORROR STORIES WITH ALL THAT MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE! I'LL BUY IT!



LATER, AT A REAL ESTATE AGENT'S OFFICE IN TOWN.

YOU... YOU WANT TO BUY
MILLFORD MANOR? OUT!
NOBODY WANTS TO BUY
THAT HOUSE! IT'S...
IT'S HAUNTED!

HAUNTED? HA? HA!
WHAT NONSENSE!
THERE'S NO SUCH
THING AS HOUSES
REALLY BEING HAUNTED!
I'LL BUY IT RIGHT NOW!



... AND AT THE GENERAL STORE WHILE BUYING
FOOD...

MILLFORD MANOR?
OLDY BE, STRANGER!
ARE YE SURE? DON'T
YE KNOW THAT PLACE
IS HAUNTED?

DON'T TELL ME YOU
BELIEVE THOSE OLD
WIVES' TALES. HA? HA!
WELL, I MAY BUY IT GHOST
AND HORROR STORES,
BUT I DON'T HAVE TO
BELIEVE 'EM!



AH... I'M ALL SET!
PLENTY OF FOOD, TYPE-
WRITER, INK, PAPER!
THIS IS GOING TO BE
BRIEF! I CAN'T WAIT
TO BEGIN WRITING!



BY CANDLELIGHT, HEART WORKS ON
HIS LATEST STORY. HARDLY DOES HE TAKE
TIME OUT TO EAT AND SLEEP, SO EN-
THUSED IS HE... THE DAYS PASS...

FINISHED! AND IN
SECOND TIME, TOO!
AH! I KNOW THIS
PLACE WAS PERFECT
FOR ME, THE MINUTE
I SAW IT!



THIS IS THE BEST STORY I'VE
EVER WRITTEN! WON'T
MY BOSS BE SURPRISED? WHA...
SOMEONE AT THE DOOR...



HIS, HENRY,
OLD BOY!

THOUGHT YOU'D
LOSE US BY
HIBERNATING,
EH?

YOU NAUGHTY
BOY! HOW COULD
YOU DESERT US
LIKE THAT? YOU
MUST COME BACK
TO THE CITY, HENRY!
YOU SIMPLY MUST!



RETURN TO THE CITY?
NOT ON YOUR LIFE! I'VE
FOUND A HOME HERE,
AND HERE I STAY!

BUT... BUT HOW CAN
ANYONE LIVE IN A
GLOOMY OLD PLACE
LIKE THIS? IT'S...
IT'S HORROR!



NONETHELESS, HOW
I STAY? I'M DRIVING
TO THE CITY TO
DELIVER A MANU-
SCRIPT. ANYONE
CARE FOR A
LIFT?

EH... NO, THANKS,
HENRY! WE'LL
LOOK AROUND
FOR AWHILE!

SURE!
WE'LL
SEE YOU
WHEN YOU
GET BACK!

HE'S
GONE!

GUY! HAVE I AN IDEA? I KNOW
HOW WE CAN GET HENRY BACK TO
THE CITY FOR \$1000! NOW, LISTEN!
HERE'S WHAT WE DO...

A FEW HOURS LATER...

IT WAS A JOB TRYING TO
GET THESE SOUND-
EFFECTS RECORDS, AND
THIS PHOTOGRAPH,
BUT I GOT THEM!

SWELL! I'VE HIDDEN
LOUDSPEAKERS IN
EVERY ROOM, HOOK
AND CRANKY UP
THIS DUMPT TENS
DOWN THE DOLLAR
SETTING UP A CONTROL
PANEL HE GOT HOLD OFF!

JEAN GOT ALL THE
SOUND EFFECTS
RECORDS, TED, AND
I'VE FINISHED
WIRING THE HOUSE!

GOOD! THIS CONTROL
PANEL IS READY TO GO!
WHEN HENRY GETS BACK,
HE'LL GET THE SURPRISE
OF HIS LIFE!

SURE! AS HAT?
WE'LL GIVE HIM
SUCH A SCARE,
HE'LL NEVER
WANT TO SEE
YOUR PLACE
AGAIN! HAT?
HAT HAT?

OH! I
HEAR HIS
CAR
PULLING UP
IN FRONT
OF THE
HOUSE!

HELLO! TED? JENNY? ANYBODY
HERE? HMM... GUESS THEY'RE
WHAT'S THAT OVER THERE?
A NOTE BY MY TYPIWRITER...

Mr. Henry—
Sorry we couldn't
wait any longer, but
this place is too
scary!
It's Haunted!
Jean



HA! HA! HA! HA!
OH, THIS IS *GOOD!* I'VE
FINALLY GOTTEN RID OF
THEM! THEY'LL NEVER
BOther ME ANYMORE! *HA!*
HA! THIS HOUSE... *HA!* *HA!*
WANTED! WHAT A LAUGH!



OKAY, JEAN, HE MUST HAVE READ
THE NOTE BY NOW! SCREAM RIGHT
INTO THE MICE...
LOUD AND SCARY!

EEE-EEE-EKK-KK



MY GOD! A
SCREAM! SOUNDS
LIKE IT CAME
FROM UPSTAIRS!



THERE'S NO DOOR...
NOBODY HERE I
HEAR... MUST BE MY
IMAGINATION!



**THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP**



IMAGINATION? I HEAR *FOOT-
STEPS!* COMING UP THE STAIRS!
COMING TOWARD ME!

**THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP**



I... I CAN HEAR THE STEPS! SOMEONE... SOMETHING
IS COMING UP THE STAIRS! I CAN HEAR IT... BUT
I CAN'T SEE IT!

**STOP! GO AWAY!
STAY AWAY
FROM ME!**



HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!
I'LL BET HE'S SCARED
STUFF! GET THAT
RATTLING GRASS
RECORD READY!

WHY...WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
CHAINS RATTLING ALL AROUND
ME? MOANS...SHRIEKING! I'M...
I'M SOGGY CRAZY! THIS PLACE
IS HAUNTED!



...GOT TO KEEP CALM! LOOK
IN EVERY ROOM! THOSE...
THOSE SOUNDS! WHERE ARE
THEY COMING FROM?



SEARCHED EVERY ROOM...ALL
EMPTY! YET THOSE WEIRD
NOISES...ALL AROUND ME! THE
CELLAR...I HAVEN'T SEARCHED
THE CELLAR!



A FEW HOURS LATER, HENRY RETURNS... WITH THE CONSTABLE AND HIS DEPUTIES...

CONFUSING IT! EVERYONE TOLD YOU THE PLACE WAS HAUNTED!

DEAR! DEAR! JUST HELP ME GET MY TYPE-WRITER AND CLOTHES! I'LL GO AND... SAY! WHAT'S THAT IN THE DRIVEWAY?



GOOD LORD! IT'S A MAN! GUESS HIS FACE! LOOK AT HIS FACE!

IT... IT WAS NO... NO FLESH-LIKE SOMETHING HAS EATEN...

CONSTABLE! COME INSIDE! QUICK!



WE FOUND HIM... JUST LIKE THAT!

FEEL IT'S FEEL! THE ONE OUTSIDE MUST BE HENRY! BUT WHERE'S JEAN?



LISTEN! SOMEONE LAUGHING! SOUNDS HYSTERICAL!

... COMING FROM THE CELLAR! O'HENRY!



JEAN!

BREATHE! SHE'S AGED TWENTY YEARS! SHE MUST HAVE SEEN SOMETHING HORRIBLE BEYOND WORDS TO MAKE HER THE BABBLING LUNATIC WE SEE!



HEHE! CONTROL PANEL... SOUND EFFECTS RECORDS! THEY TRY TO SCARE ME INTO RETURNING TO THE CITY!

... ONLY THEIR LITTLE PLAN BACKFIRED! JUST WHAT DO HAPPEN, WE'LL PROBABLY NEVER KNOW!




HENRY RETURNS TO THE CITY WHERE THE GANG STILL WHOOPEE IT UP! ONLY NOW HENRY ENJOYS IT... HE DOESN'T LIKE BEING ALONE ANYMORE!



HEH, HEH, HEH! WELL, READERS, DID YOU LIKE MY AMUSING LITTLE TALE? I HOPE SO! TO THIS DAY NO ONE KNOWS WHAT EVIL IS POSSESSED BY THAT HORROR HOUSE! HEH! BUT IF YOU WANT ANOTHER STORY... HEH! JUST READ ON!



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!



ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF! I AM THE OLD WITCH! WHEN THE VAULT-KEEPER ASKED ME TO BREW UP A SPINE-TINGLING YARN IN MY CAULDRON AND PRESENT IT TO YOU IN HIS MAGAZINE, I COULDN'T REFUSE! I AM HIS #2002-FRIEND, YOU KNOW! THIS STORY IS ONE OF MY VERY BEST! I CALL IT...

TERROR IN THE SWAMP!

AS THE TWO MEN IN THE FLATBOTTOM BOAT SLIDE SLOWLY UPSTREAM, DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO THE HEART OF THE DREADED GORPENOZE SWAMP, THE DARK, MURKY STILLNESS IS SUDDENLY SHATTERED.

HI-LOO-B-O-O-O!
YOU FIND.

LOOK, SAM! THAT OLD
BOY ON THE BANK IS
WAVING TO US...

COME AHEAD! DON'T
GO ON ANY FURTHER!
I DID YOU...

LET'S GO OVER AND SEE WHAT HE'S SAYING ABOUT! HE LOOKS TERRIFIED!

CRAY, SAM?

PLEASE! DON'T GO PAST THIS SPOT... PLEASE! PLEASE!

WHAT'S THE TROUBLE, OLD MAN?

YOU MUSTN'T GO ON INTO THE SWAMP! YOU'LL NEVER COME OUT ALIVE IF YOU DO!

LOOK, STANLEY! WE'VE HEARD ALL ABOUT THIS SWAMP! ALL ABOUT PEOPLE WHO GO INTO IT AND ARE NEVER SEEN AGAIN!

...BUT WE THINK IT'S ALL NONSENSE! I'VE HAPPED OUR TRIP TO SWAMP? IT'LL BE A SIMPLE MATTER TO RETRACE OUR STEPS...

NONSENSE, MY GENTLEMEN! I KNOW YOU! THE LEGEND OF THE OGREMORSE IS REAL! I KNOW! YOU'LL NEVER COME OUT ALIVE... UNLESS YOU LET ME GUIDE YOU!

OH! I GET IT NOW! LOOK! FOR A FAST SWAMP... THAT'S ALL!

NO! NO! YOU'RE WRONG! I'LL DO IT FOR NOTHING!

JUST WHAT IS IT IN THIS SWAMP THAT PEOPLE ARE SO AFRAID OF?

ONLY I KNOW WHAT IT ACTUALLY IS...

TELL US, OLD MAN! WHAT IS IT?

COME INTO MY SWAMP... AND I'LL RELATE THE WHOLE STORY...

THE OLD MAN LEADS THE OTHER TWO INTO HIS HOUSE BUT? THEY SEAT THEMSELVES ON SOFTLY HEAVY CHAIRS? THEN THE OLD ONE BEGINS TO SPEAK...

ABOUT TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, THREE PEOPLE CAME TO THIS PART OF THE CREEK... THREE SCIENTISTS! ONE WAS MIDDLE-AGED, ONE WAS A YOUNG WOMAN, HIS DAUGHTER, AND THE THIRD... A YOUNG MAN... THE UNCLE DUNCAN...



THEY HAD A DREAM, THESE THREE? THEY WERE GOING TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM THAT HAD BAFFLED SCIENCE FOR CENTURIES? THEY WERE GOING TO SOLVE THE SECRET OF LIFE...?

BUT, WHY FIND OLD-FORGOTTEN PLACE, FATHER? HERE, WE CAN WORK UNHINDERED BY OUTSIDE, MAMMA? NO PUBLISHERS, NO REPORTERS... NO FIFTY EYES?



YES, MAMMA? AFTER ALL, WE WOULD RECEIVE A GREAT DEAL OF CURIOSITY? TO SURE? LIVING MATTER... TO CREATE LIFE IS SOMETHING THAT IS CONSIDERED BEYOND THE REALM OF SCIENCE...

DO YOU SEE, MAMMA? WE MUST SEPARATE OURSELVES FROM SOCIETY... AT LEAST FOR A WHILE...



AND SO, PROFESSOR CARL WIND, MAMMA WIND AND ROBERT COLBY SET TO WORK, BUILDING A LABORATORY... HERE... HERE... IN THE CREEKFRONT.

AT LAST, WE ARE FINISHED?

NOW WE CAN UNPACK OUR EQUIPMENT... ALL OUR APPARATUS... AND BEGIN OUR WORK?



"THEIR EXPERIMENTING BEGAN..."

WE KNOW WHAT PROTOPLASM... LIVING TISSUE... CONTAINS? WE HAVE ANALYZED IT AND WE KNOW EVERY CHEMICAL... IN ITS PROPER PROPORTION? AND YET... WHEN WE PLACE THEM TOGETHER... COMING THEM... THEY DO NOT BEHAVE TO... LIFE? THERE IS ONE ELEMENT MISSING...



THE SPIRIT OF LIFE, SA, PROFESSOR?

EXACTLY? WE ARE LACKING A CERTAIN CONDITION? A CERTAIN STIMULUS?



PERHAPS... ELECTRICITY, FATHER? PERHAPS IF WE SPARKED THIS COMBINATION OF COMPOUNDS AND ELEMENTS... THE LIVING PROCESS WOULD BEGIN...

WE WILL TRY IT, MAMMA? WE WILL TRY EVERYTHING? THE CONDITION OR STIMULANT IS WHAT WE MUST DISCOVER



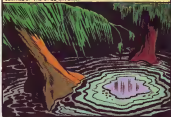
IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, THEY TRIED EVERYTHING!



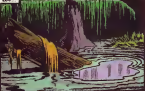
IN A FIT OF RAGE, PROFESSOR WARD HAD PLUNGED THE BEAKER CONTAINING THEIR PRECIOUS COMBINATIONS OF CHEMICALS THROUGH THE WINDOW INTO THE STAINWART, MURKY WATERS OF THE SWAMP.



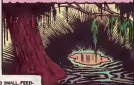
SLOWLY THE BEAKER DARK, AND THE MIXTURE SPREAD OVER THE SURFACE OF THE STILL WATER.



LAZILY, IT DRIFTED ALONG, COMING TO REST NEAR A ROTTED LOG.



AND THEN, IT APPARENTLY THERE, IN THE DARK, DARK WATERS OF THE SWAMP, IN THE HEAT AND THE STENCH AND THE DAMPNESS, IT APPARENTLY GROWN UP, UNEXPECTED, THE CREATION THAT THEY HAD TRIED FOR FIVE LONG MONTHS TO CREATE... CAME ABOUT.



IT LIVED! THE SMALL MIXTURE OF CHEMICALS AND BASIC ELEMENTS BEGAN TO LIVE! A SIMPLE FORM OF LIFE... WITH NO STRUCTURE! JUST A SHAPLESS, MOUND-LIKE MASS OF LIVING PROTOPLASM!



AT FIRST, IT REMAINED SMALL, FEEDING ON MICROSCOPIC ORGANISMS! BUT THEN, AS IT GREW... LARGER AND LARGER... IT SEEKED LARGER FOOD... SMALL FISH... INSECTS! IT ENVELOPED THEM... AS AN ANAKKA DOES... SECURE THE DELICATE JARRED THAT DISOLVE THE VICTIMS INTO A PULP MORE EASILY AVAILABLE!



AND STILL IT GREW, UNCONTROLLED... Bigger, bigger! IT MOVED ABOUT NOW... OUT OF THE WATER ONTO THE LAND... ENVELOPING AND ABSORBING EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH...



"MARVELL, PROFESSOR SAUND AND HIS ASSISTANT HAD MET WITH A NEW PROBLEM! ROBERT? COLBY?"

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, COLBY?

EXACTLY WHAT I MEAN! I'M OUTTOWN! THIS THING WE'RE TRYING TO DO... IT'S... IT'S... BROKEN!



A SCIENTIST? TALKING LIKE THAT? WHAT'S COMING OVER YOU, COLBY?

...I DON'T KNOW! I'M GETTING OUT... BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!



ARE YOU GOING WITH ME, MARIE?

BUT... BUT... BOB?



YOU SEE, MARIE? HE'S TURNED OUT TO BE A SHREWD AND CONFIDENT. ON... COLBY. GET OUT! A TRUE SCIENTIST IS NEVER AFRAID... OF ANY THING!



ARE YOU GOING, MARIE?

MY PLACE IS HERE... WITH MY FATHER AND OUR WORK! YOU'D BETTER GO!



"COLBY TURNED AND LEFT? HE CROSSED THE SIDEWALK FROM THE HOUSE OVER THE DRIVE TO THE BANK? SUDDENLY HE HEARD A TERRIFIED SCREAM!

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

WHAT THE...?



WHAT HE SAW MADE HIS BLOOD FREEZE. HIS HAIR STOOD ON END! THE LABORATORY WAS COLLAPSING INTO A MASS OF QUAKING, WRITHING LIVING MATTER!

BOY... BOY... IT CAN'T BE...



PROFESSOR WARD AND MARGE, BOTH SCREAMING HYSTERICALLY, WERE BEING SUCKED INTO THAT HOLE OF LIVING MATTER! HELPLESS TO DO ANYTHING, COLBY STOOD, TERRIFIED, WATCHING IT ALL!



... AN AWFUL, SUFFLED GUY, BURIED THROUGH THE SILENT SWAMP... AND THE CLIPPING, GLASSING HAND OF PROFESSOR WARD GRAPPLES AWAY INTO THE SWAMP'S MARE!



SO YOU SEE, GENTLEMEN, THAT IS WHAT AWAITS YOU IN THE DEEP DARK DEPTHS OF THE OCEANIC! THE LIFE THAT THEY HAD BELIEVED TO CREATE, AND THAT HAD DESTROYED PROFESSOR WARD AND HIS DAUGHTER, WANTS TO DESTROY YOU!

THAT'S QUITE A YARN, OLD TIMER, BUT IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'D RATHER IT REMAIN TO BELIEVE...

YEAH! LET'S GO SARG!

BENEFICENT, GENTLEMEN, I WARNED YOU! YOU SEE... MY NAME IS 'POCKET' COLBY!

SURE, OLD MAN SURE!



THE TWO MEN PUSH THEIR PLATYBOAT BOAT OUT INTO THE STREAM, THEIR LAUGHTER DRIFTING ACROSS THE STAGNANT SILENT WATER! SLOWLY, THEY MAKE THEIR WAY UPSTREAM SUCCEEDED...

COLBY? HE SAID HIS NAME WAS COLBY? THAT HAD THE NAME OF THE YOUNG SCIENTIST THAT ESCAPED THE THE SAME... *same... thing...*

WHA? WHY NO... NO... NO! IT'S... IT'S... THE... THING...

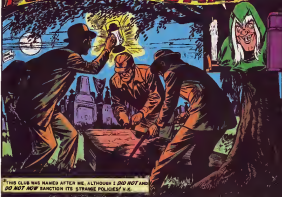


AND THAT'S MY TALE FROM THE SWAMP FOR THIS ISSUE! THE TWO MEN REFUSED TO SWALLOW OLD COLBY'S STORY AND SO, REMEMBER THEY GOT SWALLOWED UP INSTEAD SEE YOU NEXT ISSUE! SEE... NOW!



THIS IS THE STORY OF A STRANGE CLUB... AND A STILL STRANGER INITIATION! I CALL THIS TALE... A

REPORT FROM THE GRAVE



"THIS CLUB WAS NAMED AFTER ME, ALTHOUGH I DID NOT AND DO NOT NOW SANCTION ITS STRANGE POLICIES!" N.E.

MY STORY BEGINS ON A DARK NIGHT, AT THE HOME OF FRED GOODE, THE TOWN UNDERTAKER...

GENTLEMEN! AS PRESIDENT OF THE HAUL-KEEPER'S CLUB, I HEREBY CALL THIS MEETING TO ORDER! AS YOU ALL KNOW, WE ARE GATHERED HERE TO INVITE A NEW MEMBER INTO OUR HORROR CLUB TO REPLACE POOR OLD WHELP BALK, WHO DIED SUDDENLY LAST MONTH...



THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HAS DECIDED UPON A SUITABLE INITIATION! OUR PROSPECTIVE MEMBER... MR. WARREN LARK... WILL, AT THE STRIKE OF MIDNIGHT, ENTER FLEETMAN CEMETERY AND PROCEED TO EXHUME THE BODY OF OUR LATE DEPARTED MEMBER!

WHAT?



PLEASE, DO NOT INTERRUPT! GENT, I HAVE FINISHED UPON UNLANTERN THE BOOD, THE PROSPECTIVE MEMBER WILL NOTE THE FORM UPON THE DEAD MEMBER'S WATCH? HE WILL THEN REPORT BACK *HERE*? TO US! J. HAVING SET UP POOR WILLY'S FUNERAL, WILL KNOW IF MR. LAKE HAS FULFILLED HIS MISSION?



AND? I'M *ASHAMED*? IF? THE WHOLE IDEA IS *REPOLITICIAN*? IT IS NOT THE *POSSIBLE*? OF THIS CLUB TO SUBJECT PEOPLE TO SUCH A HORRIBLE *ORDEAL*!



LISTEN TO *GRAND*? SINCE WHEN DID YOU GET SO HIGH AND MIGHTY, *WARREN*?

I JUST DON'T THINK IT'S *WISDOM*, THAT'S ALL! ALL RIGHT, GENTLEMEN! I'LL PUT IT TO A *POPE*? ALL IN FAVOR OF THE *INITIATION*?



ALL HANDS, BUT ONE SO *UP*?

SOBRI, *WARREN*? YOU'RE *OUTNUMBERED*? THE *INITIATION* STANDS! YOU'LL FIND A *SPACE* IN MY GARAGE, MR. LAKE?



DON'T BE TOO *REVEREND*, LAKE? AFTER ALL... WHAT HARM CAN A *STIFF* DO?

THE PROSPECTIVE MEMBER OF THE *SMALL-PEOPLE'S CLUB* TURNS AND LEAVES THE ASSEMBLY, *WARREN* AND *TENOR* DRINK PALED FACE...



NAW-NAW!

TAKE IT *EASY*, *WARREN*!

GO ON *ADVANCE* TO *OL'* *WILLY*!

SHURE!

AS THE LAST STROKE OF TWELVE DIES AWAY, THE *PUSSY* GATE OF *FARHAYEN* CEMETERY SQUARES OPEN.



THERE'S... *REALLY* NO REASON... TO BE... *FROUGHTENED*? I... I WONDER IF JOINING THE CLUB IS *WORTH* ALL... *SHOULD* THIS?

WARREN LAKE, PROSPECTIVE MEMBER OF THE *SMALL-PEOPLE'S CLUB*, MAKES HIS WAY SLOWLY OVER THE SOFT, SILENT EARTH AND STOPS BEFORE A *BROTHER* *NEW-LOOKING* HEADSTONE...

THIS IS IT? *WILLIAM* *LAKE*, BORN, JULY 8TH, 1882... DIED... JULY 2, 1930? WILL I BE *RIGHT* AS *WELL* *RETURN*...



THE THICK SILENCE THAT HUNG OVER THE GRAVEYARD LIKE A BLACK SHROUD IS NOW SHATTERED BY THE SOUND OF WARREN LAKE'S DIGGING...



AN HOUR PASSES! THEN TWICE! SUDDENLY THE HOLLOW BOOM OF SPADE STRIKING COPPER EDGES FROM GRAVESTONE TO GRAVESTONE...



THE DIRT IS CLEARED FROM THE TOP OF THE COFFIN, AND WARREN PRIES THE LID OPEN...



QUICKLY WARREN SCAMPERS FROM THE TURNING BLACK CAVERN HE HAS GUN, AND BREATHELESSLY BEGINS TO SHOVEL THE DIRT BACK INTO THE BATTERED CASSET...



AT ABOUT THREE A.M., WARREN LAKE AGAIN ENTERS THE HOME OF FRED COOMES...



WHAT ARE YOU FALCONG ABOUT? JUST TELL US THE TIME ON POOR WILLY'S WATCH AND YOU'LL...



WHAT? YOU HEARD ME! THERE WAS NOTHING BUT A BUNCH OF RATS AND BONES IN THAT COFFIN! LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY'S MOVED THE TOMBSTONE!





AND... IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, LOOK FOR YOURSELF!

O'RON, MEN! LET'S SEE WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT!

NO? I DON'T THINK WE WANT TO! SOME THING TELLS ME...



THE REST OF THE KAGGL-VEEVEV'S GASP SHOUTS DOWN WARD'S OBJECTION, AND THEY PROCEED TO FAIRHAVEN CEMETERY!

THAT'S THIS AS WELL'S GRAVE, ALL RIGHT! I REMEMBER THE LOCATION WELL!

AND IT'S BEEN FRESHLY DUG, TOO!

BEYOND LAKE WAGST HIDDEN! LET'S GO!



THERE'S THE COFFIN!

WHY, THAT'S NOT THE COFFIN WILLI WAS BURIED IN!



...AND YOU DON'T WILLI! I WOULD JUDGE THIS PERSON TO HAVE BEEN DEAD FOR MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS!



LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE'S PULLED A SHYFTY...

SOMEONE WHO HAD SOMETHING TO ASSE...



ALL EYES TURN TO THE ONE CALLED BRADY...

WHY DID YOU OBJECT SO STRONGHOLD TO DIGGING UP WILLI'S BODY, BRADY?

WHY... I...



YOU WERE HIS ROOMMATE, WEREN'T YOU, BRADY?

AND YOU DISCOVERED HIS BODY, WEREN'T YOU?

BRADY! YOU MURDERED WILLI, DIDN'T YOU?



GOOD LORD! THAT HEAD-STRONG TOPPLED OVER...



AND THE GRAVE'S CRACKED OPEN...
NO!
NO!

SOMEBODY GRAB VARDY! THE REST OF YOU COME WITH ME! I THINK I KNOW WHAT THAT WAS!



OHAY, VARDY! DON'T TRY ANYTHING!

GENTLEMEN! I STRONGLY SUSPECT THAT UNDER THIS CRACKED GRAVE, WE WILL FIND THE BODY OF MOLLIE GALT... WHERE VARDY HID IT...



THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CLUB SETS TO WORK DIGGING HERE...



LOOK AT THIS! THE CABINET'S SPLINTERED!

SOMEBODY CALL THE POLICE! I'M GOING TO REQUEST AN AUTOPSY!



THERE'S NO NEED, GENTLEMEN! I CONFESS! I POISONED HIM! I KNEW HIM! HE TOOK MY GALT! AND IF YOU HADN'T THOUGHT OF THIS STUPID INITIATION, I WOULD HAVE GOTTEN AWAY WITH IT!

WELL, WAS VERY HELPFUL IN TELLING US WHERE HE WAS BURIED! IT WOULD HAVE BEEN AWFUL TO HAVE HAD TO DIG UP THE WHOLE CEMETERY TO FIND HIM!

BY THE WAY, FRED, JUST NOW DID THAT EXPLOSION HAPPEN?



BY THE WAY, FRED, JUST NOW DID THAT EXPLOSION HAPPEN?

SIMPLY! I MUST ADMIT IT'S ALL MY FAULT! IN MY THIRTY YEARS OF UNDERTAKING, I NEVER BEFORE MADE SUCH A MISTAKE! I REFLECTED TO MOLLIE GALT'S IN THE CABINET TO ALLOW THE GALT'S FROM THE DECOMPOSING BODY TO ESCAPE! WHEN THE PRESSURE BUILT UP...

POOF!



SEEMS LIKE LARRY, HERE, OUGHT TO BE ALLOWED TO JOIN THE CLUB ANYTIME, FRED... EVEN THOUGH HE DIDN'T ACTUALLY FULFILL HIS MISSION!

OH! NOW WE'LL HAVE ANOTHER VACANCY TO FILL WHEN THEY EXECUTE VARDY! SAY... PERHAPS FRED'D LIKE TO APPLY!

COME NOW, TO A CARNIVAL... TRAVELING FROM TOWN TO TOWN... AND I WILL SHOW YOU AN INTERESTING EXHIBIT CALLED...

BURIED ALIVE!



ANOTHER SUSPENSE STORY
IN THE VAULT OF
HORROR!

IT IS A BIDDY, TWO-BIT CARNIVAL WITH THE USUAL
FREAKS AND NOVELTIES...

STEP RIGHT UP, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! SEE JODD... THE LIVING CORPSE!
JODD... WHO STAYS UNDER SIX FEET
OF EARTH... **BURIED ALIVE**...
FOR EIGHT HOURS...

LOOK AT HIM,
DOWN THERE!
IT'S AMAZING!

BART'S
A PROMETHEUS!

THEY
PUSH
AIR
TO
'EM!



AFTER THE CROWDS HAVE GONE AND THE MIDWAY
IS DESERTED...

OKAY, BART! THE JOINT'S
GLOBBED! I'LL DO YOU
OUT, NOW!

HARRY PLUTTS! I'M
HUNGRY! AND I'VE
JUST ABOUT USED UP
ALL THE CRYSTEN...



RITA SPADES AWAY THE LOOSE
DUTY CARD! THE GREAT JOJO...

WHERE'D YOU GET THAT
HOT DOWN THERE
TODAY? MADE IT
TOUGH ON MY
"SHALLOW-
BREATHING"?

TAKE IT EASY,
SAM! I'LL BE
SERVING YOU!



WHERE YOU
GOING, RITA?

WHY, JONHONNETE!
I'M JUST GOING
TO TAKE A WALK...
THAT'S ALL!



RITA SPADERS AWAY OF THE
DARKENED HIGHWAY...

SEEMS TO ME SHE'S BEEN WALKIN'
A LOT LATELY! I'LL FOLLOW
HER TONIGHT!



SAM, THE GREAT JOJO... TALKS RITA TO THE HIGHWAY!

HOP IN, RITA!
YOU LOOK
GOOD TONIGHT!

I FEEL GOOD,
SAM! LET'S GO
SOMEPLACE AND
DANCE!

SO... THAT'S THE
SECRET THAT NO-
GOOD DAME... SHE'S
TWO-TIME WITH!



ENRAGED, SAM RETURNS TO HIS TENT... AND WAITS!
ABOUT THREE IN THE MORNING, RITA COMES IN...

WHERE'D YOU BEEN? AN' DON'T LIE TWE!
I SAW YOU WITH THAT DUDE IN
THE FLASHY CONVERTIBLE! SO
THAT'S THE THING I GET FOR
TAKIN' YOU OFF THE STREETS!

WELL, SAM!
I CAN
EXPLAIN!



ALL RIGHT! SO 'HEAD!
TALK YOUR WAY OUT
OF THIS... IF YOU
CAN!

I'M GOIN' IF FOR ONE SAM.
FOR AN' ME! I GOT A PLAN.
AND WHEN WE'RE THROUGH,
OUR GARRY DRYELL BE
OPEN! WE CAN GET MARRIED
LIKE YOU WANT!



MAKE IT GOOD,
RITA, OR
I'LL HELP YOU.

LISTEN, WILL YOU! I GOT THIS GUY ON
A STREET! I TOLD HIM YOU AN' ME
WERE MARRIED BUT THAT I'M FORCED
OF YOU! HE'S ASKIN' SAM! HE CAN BE
TAKEN FOR PLEASIN'! HERE'S MY
PLAN...



SUSPICIOUSLY, SAM LISTENS AS WITA UNFOLDS HER DABLOUS SCHEME...



AN' THEN YOU BUST IN... AN' WHEN HE SLAPS YOU, YOU FLEAP AN' SCREAM THAT SMALL-BOY-BREATHING OF YOURS! HE'LL THINK HE KILLED YOU!... AN' THEN I'LL GET HIM TO BURY YOU LATER, I'LL COME DIF YOU OFF! WE'LL BLADE-MAKE HIM FOR PLUNTY!

HE'LL THINK YOU'RE DEAD AN' HE'LL PAY OFF TO SAVE HIMSELF FROM SCARDAL! NOW'S IT SOUND?

OUNDS OKAY, WITA! ONLY YOU GOTTA GET ME OUT IN LESS THAN AN HOUR! I CAN'T LAST MORE THAN FIFTY-FIVE MINUTES...



...IT WON'T BE LIKE THE SNOW! I WON'T NEED A COFFIN... I'LL BE IN OBT AN' I CAN ONLY LAST FIFTY-FIVE MINUTES WITH THE AIR IN MY LUNGS!

DON'T WORRY, SAM! I'LL GET YOU OUT IN TIME! THEN YOU AN' ME... WE'LL BE ON EASY STREET!



THE NEXT NIGHT, WHEN WITA'S SCHEME IS TO TAKE PLACE...

HOPIN' WITA I LET THE SERVAANTS OFF TOMORNT! NOW ABOUT COMING TO MY PLACE?

WHY THAT'LL BE REAL NICE... PAUL! WEE AN' GOOF?



PAUL DRIVES WITA TO HIS PALATIAL ESTATE...

WELL, WITA! THIS IS IT? HOW DO YOU LIKE IT?

IT'S BEAUTIFUL, PAUL... JUST BEAUTIFUL!

SO ARE YOU, WITA! I'VE DREAMED ABOUT THIS MOMENT...

PAUL... LET ME GO...



PAUL'S LIFE CLOSES ON WITA'S AS THE DOOR OPENS...



I'LL TEACH YOU TO POOL AROUND WITH MY WIFE...

PAUL? IT'S MY HUSBAND... AND HE'S GOT A KNIFE!



SAM RUSHES AT PAUL AND THE BATTLE BEGINS.



EVERYTHING GOES EXACTLY AS PLANNED! SAM FALLS, STRIKING HIS HEAD...

HE... HE'S DEAD!

WHAT?



GOOD LORD! YOU'RE RIGHT! HE IS DEAD!

WHAT'LL WE DO, PAUL? HOW'LL WE DO IT?



DEAD? I'M A MURDERER? THE SCANDAL... I'LL BE MARRIED!

NO, PAUL! WAIT! NO ONE KNOWS HE WAS COMING HERE! GET RID OF HIS BODY! I'LL REFORM HIM AGAIN! THEY'LL NEVER SUSPECT YOU!

DO YOU THINK IT WOULD WORK, RITA?



AND SO, PAUL AND RITA CARRY SAM, FEIGNING DEATH BY CONTROLLED "BLOWN-BREATHING", TO A DESERTED PART OF THE ESTATE...

BURY HIM DEEP, PAUL... DEEP!

DEEP ENOUGH, SO HE'LL SMOOTHER TO DEATH... AND THEN I CAN OPERATE ALONE...



AS THE LAST SHOVEL-FULL OF EARTH IS POTTED DOWN, A SHAGGY FIGURE PEERS FROM BEHIND THE BUSHES...

SO THAT'S WHY HE LET US GO FOR THE NIGHT! HE'S WITH A WOMAN!

ALL RIGHT, BUT IT'S **SOON!** LET'S GO!

AND UNDER SEVERAL FEET OF EARTH, LIES SAM... THE GREAT ZOOBO...

IT'S ALMOST AS IF I WERE DOWN THE **JEE!** ONLY I'M NOT IN THE "JEE!"

THE SECONDS DRAG INTO MINUTES... FIVE... FIFTEEN...

WHA! SHE BETTER COME **SOON!** I'M BEGINNIN' TO SEE UP THE COCKEN IN MY LEGS...

MEANWHILE, THE SHAGGY FIGURE HAS FOLLOWED PAUL AND RITA BACK TO THE HOUSE...

NO ONE WILL EVER FIND HIM OUT THERE, PAUL! YOU'RE SAFE!

KEEP THEM AWAY! MESTA **ROOVED** SOMEBODY BACK THERE!

AND BACK IN HIS CRUDE GRAVE...

IT'S TIME... AND SHE ISN'T HERE! SHE... SHE **NEVER INTENDED** TO DO ME UP! SHE... SHE **PLANNED** TO LET ME DIE! SHE **PLANNED** IT THIS WAY! RITA! RITA!

SUDDENLY THE STILLNESS ABOVE SAM IS SHATTERED BY THE SOUND OF A SPADE... SERKING THE SOFT EARTH.

HE'S **ROOY** ENOUGH! I COULD GO AWAY! HE'LL PAY **WELL!** I'VE GOT SOMETHING ON HIS MIND! I'M GOING TO **SEE** WHO IT IS HE KILLED!

SAM, NOW NEAR UNCONSCIOUSNESS FROM LACK OF AIR, TRIES DESPERATELY TO HOLD ON...



HURRY, HURRY!
I'M... USING...
EVERYTHING...
BLACK...

THEN, WITH ONE LAST EFFORT, HE PUSHES HIMSELF THROUGH THE DIRT REMAINING OVER HIM...



TH... THANKS,
DICK!

Y-A-A-A-A-A-A-H!

THE FRIGHTENED SERVANT SCREAMS HYSTERICALLY... DROPPES AWAY INTO THE NIGHT...



NO... NO...
P-A-A-A-A-A!

POOR SAM! HE
THOUGHT I'D BE
A GORRILLA! HA!
AND SO DOES
MITA...

BACK AT HIS TENT AT THE CARNIVAL, SAM WAITS FOR MITA...



'DOUBLE-CROSSIN' WENCH! I'LL... KILL HER ON-OFF HERE SHE COMES...

SAM!



YOU THOUGHT I WAS DEAD, HAN, MITA! YOU THOUGHT YOU HAD IT ALL PLANNED?

NO, SAM, NO! I... I COULDN'T GET AWAY FROM HIM! HE JUST BROUGHT ME BACK! I WAS COMIN' IN FOR A SHAKEL... NO!



OH, SAM! I THOUGHT I WAS TOO LATE! BUT... NOW WE'RE DRAHT! HE... HE'S SCARED STIFF! HE'LL PAY PLENTY!

O'RON, MITA! WE GOTTA FACE SAM! STUFFIN' THE SHOW'S MOVIN' TONIGHT! HELP ME GET THE 'BOG' IN THE STATION WAGON...

THE 'BOG' IS SAM'S COFFIN, WHERE HE SPENDS EIGHT HOURS EVERY DAY. *BOGGIN' ALIVE!* FOR TEN CENTS, YOU CAN LOOK DOWN A GLASS TUBE AND SEE HIM IN IT!



OH, SAM! EVERYTHING'S STOWED!

GET IN, MITA! LET'S GET BOG!

FOR AN HOUR THEY DRIVE! AND THEN SAM TURNS OFF THE HIGHWAY INTO A DARK, DARK, SWAMPY AREA...



SAM? FIND THE ROAD!

IT IS FOR GOD, HONEY!

THE LAST ROAD YOU THOUGHT YOU'D LET ME ON... EN? WELL... WE'LL SEE HOW YOU'LL LIKE BEING JUMPED ALIVE!



SAM? LET ME GO! LET ME GO! LET ME GO...

FORGIVE BITA INTO THE "BOO", SAM SAYS THE LID SHUT...



I LAY IN THERE EVERY DAY, BITA! EVERY DAY WHILE YOU PLANNED TO GET RID OF ME...

NO, SAM! NO...

SAM PICKS UP THE BOX AND CARRIES IT TO THE EDGE OF A STRANGE-LOOKING POOL...



NOW YOU'RE GONNA DIE IN THERE, BITA! I'M GONNA DROP YOU INTO THE SWAMPYLAND! THEY'LL NEVER FIND YOU... BITA NEVER!

WAKE ME UP, SAM...

SAM STANDS ON THE EDGE AND DROPS THE COFFIN INTO THE BEATING SAND...



GOOD-BYE, BITA! GOOD... PAAAAHHHH!

NO! NO!

AS THE COFFIN, HEAVY WITH BITA'S STRUGGLING BODY, PLUNGES INTO THE PUTRID, SPONGE-FILLED BOB... SAM FOLLOWS...



MY COAT... I HUNG UP MY COAT!

THE HEAVY "BOB" QUICKLY DISAPPEARS BENEATH THE SURFACE OF THE SWAMPYLAND... AND SOON AFTER...



BITA... HELP ME... I... I... COULDN'T... SHORE... BLISS... BRNNNN!

...SAM AND BITA ARE BURIED ALIVE... FOR THE LAST TIME...

THE VAULT OF

1 ★ 10

THE VAULT OF
HORROR
★ ★

THE VAULT OF

HORROR



LEGENDARY 1950s EC COMICS!

HORROR



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THE VAULT OF



200
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THE MADMAN



THE OLD WITCH



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THE VAULT OF HORROR!



HA! HA! HA! WELL... YOU READERS MUST HAVE STOUT HEARTS TO CONTINUE COMING BACK FOR MORE OF MY GRUESOME TALES! THIS TIME I HAVE A *REAL SHOCKER* FOR YOU! A STORY THAT WILL SEND VIBRANT CHILLS OF TERROR THROUGH YOU AND RACK YOUR BODY WITH ITS SUSPENSE! THIS YARN, FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION IS CALLED...

WEREWOLF CONCERTO!



OUR STORY OPENS IN THE ONLY HOTEL IN THE SMALL TOWN OF LEINTZ, HUNGARY. IT IS NIGHT... AND TO SOME OF THE GUESTS IT IS AN EVENING OF QUIET REPOSE. BUT FOR ONE OF THEM, IT IS A GRIM, HORRID MOMENT OF VICIOUS DEATH!





'MADEMOISELLE NICHELINE... FAMED CONCERT PIANIST... TO GIVE CONCERTS IN BRAYDA? BRAPDA? WHY, THAT'S NOT FIVE MILES FROM HERE! SAY-Y... THAT GIVES ME AN IDEA!



MADMOISELLE NICHELINE? THIS IS HUBERT ANTOINE, MANAGER OF THE FAMOUS VENEZIAN GARDENS HOTEL IN LEINTZ! I WISH TO OFFER YOU MY FINEST HOTEL SUITE TO USE DURING YOUR ENGAGEMENT IN BRAYDA! I OFFER IT TO YOU... FREE!



YOU ARE TOO KIND, M'SIEU! I AM HAPPY TO ACCEPT!

HA! HA! WITH MADMOISELLE NICHELINE AS MY GUEST, THE TOURISTS WILL FIGHT TO GAIN ENTRANCE! HA! HA! I'M A GENIUS!



YES, HUBERT WAS PROUD OF HIMSELF, AND THAT NIGHT HE SLEPT BLISSFULLY! HOWEVER, THE FOLLOWING AFTERNOON, A LARGE TRUCK PULLED TO A STOP IN FRONT OF THE HOTEL!



JUST A MOMENT! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? I DIDN'T ORDER ANY PIANO! OUR SUITES ARE ALL COMPLETELY FURNISHED!



THIS IS MADMOISELLE NICHELINE'S PERSONAL CONCERT PIANO! WHERE SHE GOES, FREE GOES, TOO!

MADMOISELLE NICHELINE? PERSONAL PIANO? OH?... OH, OF COURSE! CERTAINLY! CERTAINLY! RIGHT THIS WAY!



THIS IS OUR FINEST SUITE! IT COVERS ONE ENTIRE FLOOR! I'LL HAVE THAT PIANO REMOVED SO YOU CAN SET UP IN ITS PLACE! ER... ANY IDEA WHEN THE MADMOISELLE WILL ARRIVE?



PROBABLY TODAY. SHE DOESN'T LET THIS PIANO OUT OF HER SIGHT FOR LONG!

HUBERT WAS *ESTATE* WITH JOY! HE WAITED ALL DAY IN ANXIOUS ANTICIPATION...BUT MADEMOISELLE MICHELINE DIDN'T ARRIVE! LATE THAT EVENING...



...HER CLOTHES AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS CAME, SIR, BUT NOT HER?



NOT YET, EN? PERHAPS SHE'S NOT COMING UNTIL TOMORROW!

...WHAT THE DEVIL? NOT! BROKER? THAT...THAT GIRL STEPPING FROM THE ELEVATOR? IT'S MADEMOISELLE MICHELINE!



MADEMOISELLE MICHELINE! IT'S AN HONOR TO HAVE YOU AS OUR GUEST! I MUST APOLOGIZE FOR NOT BEING ON HAND TO GREET YOU! AH...WE DIDN'T SEE YOU CHECK IN...

QUITE ALL RIGHT, M'SIEU. IT IS OF NO CONSEQUENCE. I SHALL BE OUT ALL EVENING. PLEASE SEE THAT NO ONE ENTERS MY ROOM!



WHAT? YOU SAID SHE DIDN'T ARRIVE! WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME SHE WAS HERE?



BUT...BUT SHE DIDN'T ARRIVE! I MEAN, SHE DIDN'T CHECK IN! SEE? THE REGISTER HASN'T BEEN SIGNED! MAYBE THE ELEVATOR BOY...

HONEST, MR. ANTOINE! I'VE BEEN ON DUTY ALL DAY, AND I SWEAR I DON'T TAKE HER UP! SOMEBODY RANG THE BELL BUZZER ON HER PRIVATE FLOOR...AND *THERE SHE WAS!*

HMPH! SLEEPING ON THE JOB, PROBABLY! I'VE NEVER BEEN SO EMBARRASSED!



HEH, HEH! WELL ANYWAY, FRIENDS, WEEKS PASSED AND THE HOTEL BEGAN TO PROSPER AGAIN! HUBERT WAS VERY HAPPY! BUT LOVELY MADEMOISELLE MICHELINE INTRIGUED HIM...



PUZZLING...CAN'T UNDERSTAND HER, NEVER SEE HER DURING THE DAY...SAYS SHE PRACTICES AT NIGHT! YET NO ONE HAS EVER HEARD HER PRACTICE? ...MAYBE SHE'S A PHONY?

RIDICULOUS! TOO WELL KNOWN TO BE A PHONEY! NEVER SEEMS TO EAT...NOT IN THE HOTEL...WHY? STRANGE SAYS... CAN'T FIND HER...



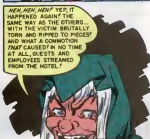
YES, EVERYTHING WAS FINE! GUESTS CONTINUED TO ARRIVE AND THE FUTURE LOOKED BRIGHT. IT SEEMED THAT PEOPLE HAD FORGOTTEN ABOUT THE SORE MURDERS...UNTIL ONE NIGHT...



...A CROUCHED, FURTIVE, FIGURE PROWLED THROUGH THE HOTEL HALLS AND QUIETLY ENTERED ONE OF THE ROOMS...



HEH, HEH, HEH! YES, IT HAPPENED AGAIN! THE SAME WAY AS THE OTHERS... WITH THE VICTIM BRUTALLY TORN AND RIPPED TO PIECES! AND WHAT A COMOTION THAT CAUSED! IN NO TIME AT ALL, GUESTS AND EMPLOYEES STREAMED FROM THE HOTEL!



I'M NOT STAYING HERE ANY LONGER! THE POLICE SAY A WRECKFUL IS WHAT KILLED THOSE PEOPLE!

YEAH! I WON'T STAY IN THIS PLACE EITHER!

I'M GOING, TOO!

...I WOULDN'T BE FOUND DEAD IN THIS JOINT!





KA'KA'KA' SURPRISED? HEH,
HEH! YES, EVERY MONTH, ON
THE NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON,
HUBERT ANTOINE BECAME
TRANSFORMED INTO A SHAR-
ING SAVAGE WEREWOLF! AND,
AS ALWAYS, THERE WAS BUT
ONE THING IN HIS MIND...HE
MUST FIND A VICTIM!



...NO ONE HERE? NEED TO FIND
SOMEONE? NO ONE HERE...
BUT? THERE IS SOMEONE!
MADONNISELLE BACHELIERE!



...IN HER SUITE! THAT'S
WHERE SHE IS... IN HER SUITE!
I KNOW SHE'S THERE!



CAN'T FIND HER!
WHERE IS SHE?
...KNOW SHE'S HERE!
WHERE?
WHERE?



SEARCHED EVERY ROOM! NOT HERE! NO ONE
ELSE AROUND! I NEED A VICTIM!
BLAST IT! WHERE IS SHE?!



UNDEPENDABLE WOMAN! I'M
GOING **CRAZY!** I'VE GOT
TO FIND HER!



BLAST IT!
BLAST IT!



WHAT THE DEVIL?? HER PIANO...IT DIDN'T MAKE ANY NOISE WHEN I HIT THE KEYS? ???



WHAT THE...? NO STRINGS LEFT? NO STRINGS? ONLY... ONLY DIRT!



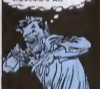
DIRT? WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD SHE KEEP DIRT IN HER PIANO... UNLESS... UNLESS...



GOOD LORD? I KNOW WHY! AND I KNOW WHY NO ONE EVER HEARD HER PRACTICE... AND WHY SHE NEVER EATS!



OF COURSE! IT'S ALL CLEAR NOW! THAT'S WHY NO ONE SEES HER DURING THE DAY... ONLY AT NIGHT! BECAUSE... BECAUSE SHE SLEEPS ALL DAY... HERE IN THIS PIANO! SHE'S... SHE'S A...



VAMPIRE!



-THE END-

HEH, HEH, HEH! NOW THERE WAS A STIRRING FEMALE THAT I THOUGHT WAS IN GOOD FORTUNE! MADE NOISES LIKE MICHELLE REALLY ENDED HER JUNGLE WITH A HOT JACK, DIDN'T SHE? WELL, AFTER THAT, YOU CAN BE SURE NO ONE WAS BOTHERED BY HEADPOCKETS! HOW- EVER THEY DID HAVE SOME RUN-INS WITH A VAMPIRE! HEH! HEH! BUT READ ON, FRIENDS! THERE ARE MORE GUILTY PARTIES AWAITING YOU!



HERE IS A CHILLING TALE
CONCERNING A MISERLY OLD
UNDERTAKER AND THE HORROR
OF HIS



FITTING PUNISHMENT



MY STORY BEGINS ON A DARK AND DIMAL NOVEMBER NIGHT! OUTSIDE A DARKENED HOUSE STANDS A RAGGEDLY CLOTHED FIGURE...

"THIS IS THE HOUSE," THE MAN SAYS. "EZRA FLINT, TOWN UNDERTAKER? I'LL KNOCK."



THE HEAVY KNOCKER ON THE BATTERED DOOR IS LIFTED, AND THE BOOMING SOUND ECHOES AND RE-ECHOES THROUGH THE BLACK CORRIDORS INSIDE THE HOUSE! SOON, THE DOOR CREAKS SLOWLY OPEN.

"YES?"

"IT IS I, UNCLE EZRA! IT IS I... STANLEY! YOUR NESTER'S BOY!"





WHAT DO YOU WANT?

LET ME COME IN! IT IS COLD AND I AM DRILLED TO THE BONE!



THE WRINKLED OLD MAN MOVES ASIDE AND THE TATTERED FIGURE OF THE YOUTH STEPS INSIDE...

LORD, UNCLE! IT IS AS COLD IN HERE AS IT IS OUT THERE! NO FIRE...

FIRE'S BURN COAL! COAL COSTS MONEY! WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?



IT IS MY MOTHER! SHE IS DEAD! I HAVE COME TO LIVE WITH YOU!

WHAT? BUT... I... CAN'T AFFORD IT! YOU'LL HAVE TO BE CLOTHED... FED...

I'LL WORK, UNCLE! I'LL PAY FOR MY KEEP! I CAN CUT WOOD FOR THE FIRE... HELP YOU IN THE SHOP...

HEM! VERY WELL! BUT REMEMBER! NO WORK, NO FOOD!



AND THAT IS HOW STARLEY CAME TO LIVE WITH OLD EZRA, THE TOWN UNDERTAKER...

AND AFTER YOU FINISH CLEANING THE SHOE, YOU CAN HELP ME SAND-PAPER THE COFFIN!

YES, UNCLE EZRA!



EZRA WAS HARD ON THE BOY! HE WORKED HIM WITHOUT A LET-UP! EZRA WAS GREED AND MISERLY, AND STARLEY LEARNED MANY HORRIBLE THINGS ABOUT HIM...

WAIT, YOU FOOL! DON'T NAIL DOWN THE COFFIN, YET?

BUT, THE FAMILY HAVE ALL SEEN THE BODY! THE FUNERAL PROCESSION WILL BE HERE SOON...



THE SOLE! WE HAVEN'T REMOVED THE SOLE FROM HIS TEETH YET! IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE MY CHARGE, STARLEY, YOU MUST AS WELL LEARN EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW!

REMOVE THE SOLE FROM HIS TEETH?

THE IDEA WAS REVOLTING TO STANLEY, BUT... AT HIS UNCLE'S INSISTENCE... THE GOLD WAS REMOVED...

GOOD! THIS OUGHT TO BEING FIVE DOLLARS AT THE JEWELERS! **HOW** YOU CAN MAIL DOWN THE COFFIN, STANLEY!

YES, UNCLE!



THE OLD MAN WAS TIGHT! MONEY WAS HIS MASTER! HE NEVER MISSED AN OPPORTUNITY TO SAVE AND PITCH A PENNY WHEN THE CHANCE CAME...

BUT UNCLE! I REALLY **DO** NEED A NEW PAIR OF SHOES!

YOU'LL WAIT! THERE'LL BE SOME-**BODY** DYING SOON... AND YOU CAN TAKE THEM FROM THE **BODY**!



THAT'S THE WAY HE WAS! BUT STANLEY COULD NOT LEAVE HIM! HE HAD NO OTHER RELATIVES... ONLY THIS MEERLY CREEPY OLD MAN...

STANLEY! COME DOWN! THERE'S BEEN A **DEATH**!

YES, UNCLE! I'M **COMING**!



STANLEY WAS SENT TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY OF THE DEPARTED SOON, TO TAKE THE ORDER FOR THE COFFIN...

YOU'RE SURE THESE MEASUREMENTS ARE CORRECT, STANLEY? REMEMBER! LUMBER COSTS MONEY! I DON'T WANT TO MAKE A COFFIN LARGER THAN I HAVE TO!

THEY ARE CORRECT, UNCLE!



WHEN THE COFFIN WAS FINISHED, A MEMBER OF THE DEAD MAN'S FAMILY CAME TO SEE IT...

BUT... THIS IS A **FINE COFFIN!**

DIDN'T YOU **ORDER** A FINE COFFIN?



WHY, **NO**? I ORDERED **ONE**!

I... I AM SORRY, **SEN**? I'LL MAKE AN **OTHER** ONE AT ONCE!



AFTER THE MOURNER LEFT...

STANLEY! COME DOWN HERE! AT ONCE!

COMING, UNCLE!





SOMEHOW, OLD EZRA MANAGED TO FINISH THE DARK COFFIN IN TIME FOR THE FUNERAL! BUT THE FINE COFFIN... WHAT COULD HE DO WITH THAT?

I'LL SAVE IT! I MAY BE ABLE TO USE IT ON ANOTHER BODY...



THE WEEKS WENT BY AND STANLEY BEGAN TO MOVE ABOUT ON HIS CRUTCHES...

WHAT GOOD ARE YOU, NOW? YOU CAN'T WORK! ALL YOU'LL DO IS COST ME MONEY!

TOO BAD, UNCLE! YOU SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT THAT BEFORE YOU HIT MY BACK WITH THAT HAMMER!



AND AS THE MONTHS WENT BY OLD EZRA FLINT GREW MORE AND MORE BULLETY THAN ONE NIGHT... WHILE STARRING AT THE UNUSED PINE COFFIN... HE GOT AN IDEA...

WHY NOT? NAH! I COULD KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE! I'D USE THE COFFIN, AND I'D BE RID OF THAT HELPLESS CRIPPLE...



AND SO ONE DARK NIGHT AS STANLEY HOBBOLED UP THE STAIRS ON HIS CRUTCHES...

LET ME STUNCLE!
I... I...



THEY CALLED IT AN ACCIDENTAL DEATH, AND EZRA BEGAN TO MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR THE FUNERAL...

YOU BET, STANLEY! YOUR MISTAKE HURT ALL WANTED! IT'S YOUR COFFIN NOW! HURRY!



GOOD LORD! I NEVER THOUGHT! HE... HE'S TOO TALL! HE DOESN'T FIT! I... I WON'T MAKE ANOTHER COFFIN TO FIT HIM! THAT WOULD COST MONEY! I... I KNOW! I KNOW WHAT TO DO!



THE FUNERAL WAS HELD ON A GREY, RAINY DAY! FEW PEOPLE CAME...

MAYBE IT'S ALL FOR THE BEST, EIRA! AFTER ALL... HE WAS AN INDOUBTABLE...

SUCH A SHORT COFFIN FOR SO TALL A BOY?



THAT NIGHT...AS EIRA SAT BEFORE A DYING FIRE... THERE CAME A THUMPING AT THE DOOR...AS IF SOMEONE WERE... *RICKING* IT...

WHAT... WHO... WHO'S THERE?



SLOWLY EIRA OPENED THE DOOR AND LOOKED OUT...

WHY, THERE'S NO ONE HERE! S...S...



TRICK HIS BLANCE FELL UPON THE GROUND? THERE, AT THE DOORSTEP, LAY A FOOT...!

STANLEY'S FOOT!



QUICKLY, EIRA SNATCHED THE FOOT FROM WHERE IT LAY AND RUSHED INTO THE HOUSE WITH IT...

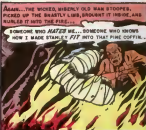
SOMEONE *KNOWS!* SOMEONE KNOWS WHAT I'VE DONE!



FRANTICALLY HE TORSED THE BLOODY APPENDAGE INTO THE SMOLDERING COALS...

SOMEONE'S TRYING TO FRIGHTEN ME... PLAY A TRICK! S... S...





THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Dear EG Publisher,

My name is Roland Hopper and I read every EC comic I can get my hands on. You said you were selling EC sets. I am sure these would not sell for the same price (as a comic) but I am interested in buying anyway, so would you send me a price list?

I also read you were going to put out a [30-pg] series of EC I probably wouldn't get to Florida because the ones I have I got in the northern states. If so, could you please send me a price list for it, too.

My favorite EC is VAULT. The stories of the Vault-Keeper, The Crypt-Keeper and The Old Witch are so thrilling and chilling. I like them all!

I have two (earlier reprints) 84-pg SLAD HAUNT #1 and the 84-pg RCP HAUNT #1. I bought all my ECs at \$20 apiece and well worth it and more. If you could send me a price list I would meet up with the Vault-Keeper himself or himself for get them.

Roland Hopper Ponce-de-Leon, FL

Yes, we are selling complete sets of the EC Library (hardbacks) and individual volumes! If you bought original ECs for \$20 each, you will be amazed to know that is our price for a typical VOLUME (usually six comics)! You or any EC fan can get a price list from us at the address at the end of the letter column.

For your reference, I am the Vault-Keeper HIMSELF (Thanks for asking! Huh?) —VK

Dear CK, WK and OW,

I love your comics. I'd like to know which of your comics are gory and show more blood. I'm going to order an EC library boxed set, but I like the stories that involve girls or zombies. Are the boxed sets' stories in color? Any chance that the Vault-Keeper or the Old Witch can get TV shows of their own?

Rudy Gomez, age 13 Owings Mills, MD

In the boxed sets (EC Library), the stories are in black & white—and you've never seen the artwork so clear—but the covers are in color. I haven't done a blood-count, but since each Ghoulureta appears in each horror title you can't go wrong!

NEXT ISSUE



So far, Whistle and I have trouble appearing on closed circuit security cameras! —VK

Dear WK,

I love all of your comics. I have to ask you and OW. Why does CK always talk about the Crypt of Terror, like at the beginning [of a story] he says "Welcome back to the Crypt of Terror."?

WK, I have all of your RCP comics 1-6 and also your Ghoulureta #1.

Rich True Omaha, NE

Why, The Crypt-Keeper LIVES in the Crypt of Terror! And a ratty, no-class stomp it is, feet! I live in the Vault of Horror, and The Old Witch lives in that big pot, I guess.

Hey, Rich, why not get the REST of the RCP and Ghoulureta 84-pagers? See our ad in this comic. —VK

Dear WK,

I just bought [Vault #3] I loved it. Now I'm hooked. Could I get your autograph? I draw a picture, hope you like it!

Tanner Smith FT Smith AR



I know those flatheads in my comics would work! I like your picture—what is that, Silly Barty or "Jesse"? —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I love your stories. [You're] the best of all the storytellers. I like the Crypt-Keeper but the Old Witch is rather boring. I have more VAULT than HAUNT or CRYPT. I make my own comics a lot. As a matter of fact I asked Russ Cochran to publish some of my comics. He said that they were just duplicates of the original.

Chris Kappel Newark, DE

Yeah! I am the best! Homer himself was a pillar next to me! Russ was right to point out any duplication of someone else's work. The best way to learn to write & draw comics is to learn to write & draw PERIOD, then come up with your own comics or produce what someone will hire you to do. —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I've just read VAULT #4 and was thoroughly engrossed in its creepy contents, which I lapped up like a bowl of Blood Soup in a Vampire Restaurant! Tasty! I like the front cover very much, with its excellent Johnny Craig drawing, very effective when combined with the lurid yellow-on-blue lettering. It's nice to see that the Vault-Keeper, the Crypt-Keeper and the Old Witch are back in town.

I especially like "Terror in the Swamp", drawn by Al

Feldstein in his unique way. Not many comics these days have the reader to the shadowy and murky realms of the Claustrophobic. I like the Vault-Keeper's crack about "They got swallowed up instead." That's cute. Johnny Craig's "Horror House!" is another fine [story] [I reached] with surprise and shock at the fate of the heroes being somehow driven to suicide and madness. I like the way in which there is no rational explanation for what happens at the end. I like a comic that's unpredictable. That final panel of "Repeat from the Grave" is also very effective as Doc of the Vault-Keeper's Club says: "perhaps you'd like to apply" to the reader.

I reckon I've been missing out not buying VAULT. As a science-fiction enthusiast I want for the WEIRD SCIENCE first as I have great respect for the EC of comics but my eyes bogged in the comic shop when I saw the cover of VAULT #4.

John Miller Edinburgh SCOTLAND

Welcome to the fold (goblins, mutants!) I'm glad you could see well enough to try a copy of VAULT with your eyes all bogged! —VK

Dear EC Fans & The Vault-Keeper,

I got something to tell you guys. I just moved from West Virginia to Pennsylvania, and when I arrived I went right over to the comic book store to pick up some ECs. When I got there I couldn't find them, so I had to wait for the clerk to get off the phone with his girlfriend or something. When he did, I asked for EC, he thought I said DC and took me over to the BATMANS, I said, "No EC, like 'Tales from the Crypt!'" Then he took me over to the bottom of the shelf and all the way in the back was one copy of VAULT #4. Then he really surprised me by saying, "I always thought EC was a dead line." I right away said, "No Way! I love the EC line, I think they're a lot more interesting than the super hero comics." Then he surprised me for a second time by saying, "Really? I'll have to try one sometime." EC = Dead Title?? No Way!! A dedicated reader,

Chris Kurliel address unknown

Much as I like zombies, Marvel (or DC) Zombies have a lot to learn. And I'm proud my fans, like you, Chris, will act as endless embodiments and learn 'em for me! —VK

My Darling Vault-Keeper,

My love letter to EK was printed in SHOCK #3. His reply? "Take a number." Could he have been any more insulting? He'd better watch out. You know the saying, "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned." (Especially one with a new meat grinder.)

Now that he has shown his true colors, I realize that you are the only decaying corpse for me. So what do you say? Care to join me for a graveyard stroll? (I'm sure you will after you find what's left of EK.)

Cemetery life can get so boring. My neighbors are such sniffs! I would love to have anyone, dead or alive, human or not—write me at one of my favorite "haunts" (address below)

Suzanna Howe RT 3 Box 36
Mum, OK 74564

Another trail who's seen the light? Maybe I'll swing the ol' hearse past your cemetery gate some pm and give you a hunk (I always was a big MN with the tomatoes 'cause I know how to treat 'em, and I KNOW that what women like is a man can't) have changed since the 50s?, I bet a girl with a meat grinder is a great little cook!

The only date EK can get is Friday the 13th! —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

VAULT #4 was the best so far! "Horror House" was almost exactly like "House of Horror" from HAUNT #1. We found out nothing. And since Johnny Craig writes what he draws, he must have written "Horror House!" And since "Horror House!" is exactly the same as "House of Horror", Johnny must have written the unimaginative "House of Horror" in the same issue (HAUNT #1) as the imaginative "The Wall". I don't understand!

Another thing I don't understand is why did the comics have such weak plots in the early 50s, but became scener and more CRUEL (like "Buried Alive"), my favorite story in VAULT #4) in the real 50s?

Even though I don't like the storyline for "House of Horror", I loved the amusing and startling drawing of the woman who had seen the ghosts!

I like VAULT #4's "Terror in the Swamp" better than "The Thing in the Swamp" because you see the two young men being eaten. GOOD WORK!

Oliver Sussel Erie PA

Asks you are almost always right in assuming a Craig-drawn story is from a Craig-written script, we are almost certain "House of Horror" was a Feldstein script. And "House of Horror" is typical of the differences between the early stuff and the later stuff. It simply took me a while to train the talented but work-a-day EC stable to be the horror comic geniuses they became! Up till then, NOBODY had got it right! —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

When I read Al Feldstein's "Terror in The Swamp" in VAULT #4, I thought it seemed familiar. Looking through my collection, I found the same story in HAUNT #1, called "The Thing in The Swamp". What's the deal? Why did Feldstein and EC run the same story twice in one year with only minor variations? It's debatable whether the more socialist ending improves the story any, but I think the original ending is better since it allows you to use your imagination.

Barry McCollum Afton, S.

The motivation for re-running "Swamp" is lost in the mists of time, but I think for MY version that after a 3-pg appetizer in "Swamp" it'd be cheating not to show the MAIN COURSE! —VK

NEXT ISSUE

NOTHING WAS SAID/ THE BUTLER STIFFENED... WE FACE A SPOOKY PALLOO... AND BEARS OF GREAT STOOD OUT ON HIS BEAR. HE WAS IN DEATHLY FEAR, BUT HE REMAINED BY THE SID, STAMING FURDLY AT THE WALL FROM BEHIND THE STUBS GAMES WITH EACH MOM, THE TENSION MOUNTED...



Dear WK,

As I was reading "Terror in the Swamp" in VAULT #4, the story seemed to be familiar. I looked through back issues and sure enough, the same story had been in HAUNT #1. Only the title and the splash page had been changed, and an extra panel had been squeezed in at the very end of the story. I had thought that repeating stories from earlier issues is something that would only be resorted to by the lesser comics. That all seemed rather sloppy for such a high quality outfit as EC. In fact, Belmont may well have sent the letter about "crap" he'd "already seen" to EC back in 1960.

If Belmont (VAULT #4 local) is unhappy now, wait until January of 1988. That is when CRYPT begins a run of a solid year and a half of issues of CRYPT that had already been published by either you or Gladstone. Also during that period will be three issues of VAULT, four issues of HAUNT, four issues of DRIME, four issues of WERID SCIENCE, and three issues of WERID FANTASY that will be crap that Belmont has already seen. If a lot of your readers are like Belmont, then your sales could take a real nose dive during that period. I hope that you will be able to make it through that period so that the rest of us will be able to get a complete collection of EC comics.

That just allows to go you that there is one bad thing about getting the EC Library volumes. Once I have gotten the complete set of Library volumes, then all of the comics that are published from then on will be crap that I have already seen. That leaves me in a real dilemma. If I read the Library volumes first, then the comics will all be crap that I have already seen. But if I read the comics first then all the stuff in the Library volumes will be crap that I have already seen. I guess that it is a lucky thing that good literature is something that needs to be read many times over.

Warren Standford Smyrna, CA

Consider this, Warren. In 1988 we may be sold out of ALL the 64-pg.ers, and people will be unable to handle their previous collections—they'll just have to rely on our chronological 32-pg.ers for reading! We'll get 'em coming and going (I hope!) in EC's deluges, they only remain maybe four stories; I'd hate to try and count how many Atlas, et al, recycled during the 60s! —WK



NEXT ISSUE



Dear Mr. Cochran,

I love your line of EC reprints. I started reading them when they first came out, and have not stopped. The colors are so vivid, and the original artwork reproduced in such clarity. AMAZING! I am one of several devoted readers of my local comic shop here in Proctorburg, Massachusetts. Please keep up the great work, Russ!

The secret behind the success lies in the books' ability to transcend time. These stories are as popular now, you will be able to publish many more issues to come!

George P. McManus Leominster, MA

Yes! —WK

Dear WK,

How come you, CK and CW always talk about each other and call each other brotherhood and things like that? Also, how did you get the idea to do horror stories?

Clad Oswald Englewood, CO

I don't know what those two geezers (Shoemaker's) are up to, but I sell a speed a speed and a brotherhood a brotherhood! I know they're brotherhood 'cause of all the crap they produce! Woodpecker's don't know whether to fly or go fly when they see 'em! —WK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I just love VAULT. It has the best stories in it that I've ever read. My favorite stories are "The Dead Will Return", "And All Through the House", "Woodoo Vengeance!", "Mescalotulon!" and "Beauty Fear". I also love all the issues of CRYPT. All my friends love them, too. I sure wish I could get involved with making these EC comics, because I have a few creepy stories up my sleeve, too! I hope to write to you again. I'm eleven years old.

Audrey Sheehan Reading, MA

Let's see, this means I can look for your next letter in 2004. Meantime, let those creepy stories creep out of your sleeve, down your hand and onto some paper. The best way to become a writer is to write—incessantly! —WK

Also available this month are WERID FANTASY and TRO-PISTED TALES. Search for HAUNT, WERID SCIENCE-FANTASY and CREED next month. Don't forget CRYPT, WERID SCIENCE and SCIENCE. See them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see ad at the bottom).

SUBS: US\$2.00 CRYPT #1, \$1 each. All others up to issue #6, \$1.00 each. Issues #7 and up, \$2 each. Add \$2 per order (\$1.00 outside US) for S&H.

We want letters! Write to:
Vault
Russ Cochran
POB 400
West Plains, MO 65775

THE COMIC REPRINTS
VAULT OF HORROR "FIB" (6, EC, EC, EC, EC)

COVER by Johnny Craig
"Werewolf Concert"
"Fitting Punishment"
"The Ghastly Wager"
"Escape!"
Johnny Craig
Graham Ingels
Jack Kamen
Al Petrosian

Here is a ghostly yarn designed
to terrorize you! I call it...

THE GRAVE WAGER

FRAMEN



MY STORY STARTS ON THE MORNING OF AN AMUSEMENT
FAIR! THREE MEN STOOD FASCINATED BEFORE A
REBUSTICATING BARBER...

YES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!
THIS IS **PIRRO**, THE **WAX-
MAN!** SEE HOW **PIRRO**
RESEMBLES A **WAX**
FIGURE...

"HE'S POOLING!" ROF!
IT AS A RE'S
"WAX FIGURE!" ALME!

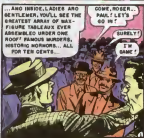


...AND THERE, LADIES AND
GENTLEMEN, YOU'LL SEE THE
GREATEST ARRAY OF **WAX-
FIGURE TABLEAUX** EVER
ASSEMBLED UNDER ONE
ROOF! FAMOUS MURDERS,
HISTORIC HORRORS... ALL
FOR TEN CENTS...

COME, ROBER...
PAUL! LET'S
GO IN?

SURELY!

I'M
GAM!



THE THREE MEN... ROSEN HANE, PAUL BOND, AND CLYDE LAKE... MADE THEIR ADMSSIONS INTO THE WAX MUSEUM!

THAT **FAT** GUY CERTAINLY LOOKED LIKE WAX...

AND **THESE WAX** FIGURES IN HERE LOOK ALMOST ALIVE!



WOW! WHAT A HORRIBLE SCENE! COME! LET US LEAVE!

YES! THE FIGURES OF THE VICTIMS LOOK LIKE ACTUAL CORPSES!

WHAT'S WRONG, PAUL... CLYDE? WEAK STOMACH?



AND YOU, NO DOUBT, HAVE A **STRONG** STOMACH!

WELL, THE SIGHT OF A **CORPSE** NEVER BOTHERED ME!

IT WOULD IF YOU WERE ALONE WITH IT!



NONSENSE! IT WOULDN'T BOTHER ME ONE BIT!

I HAVE TWENTY DOLLARS IN MY WALLET THAT SAYS YOU WOULDN'T SPEND A NIGHT ALONE WITH A CORPSE!



I'D DO IT FOR **FIFTY**!

WHAT SAY, CLYDE? SHALL WE MAKE IT **FIFTY** TOGETHER?

ALL RIGHT! I'LL BET!



NOW, YOU'RE BOTH BETTING ME **FIFTY** DOLLARS THAT I WON'T SPEND A NIGHT ALONE IN A ROOM WITH A **CORPSE**, RIGHT?

RIGHT!

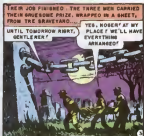


OKAY! IT'S A BET! ONLY THERE'S ONE SMALL DETAIL! WHERE DO WE GET THE **CORPSE**?

RIGHT!

OH!





THE TWO MEN WITH THE SHEETED CORPSE STOOD WATCHING AS ROBER DISAPPEARED DOWN THE ROAD/THEIR...

COME, CLOYDE? HELP ME CARRY THE BODY BACK INTO THE CEMETERY!



WE'RE GOING TO PUT THE BODY BACK INTO THE GRAVE...

BUT THE WAGER!



I HAVE A MUCH BETTER PLAN! AND WE DON'T NEED A BODY!

WHAT IS YOUR PLAN, PAUL?



AS THE TWO MEN, IN THE DARKNESS OF THE CEMETERY, WENT AWAY... PAUL EXPLAINED HIS PLAN...

YOU REMEMBER THAT FURRO GUY... THE FAT-BART?



HE WILL BE OUR CORPSE...

OH, NOW I GET IT! AND TOMORROW NIGHT, WHEN ROBER IS ALONE WITH HIM...



RIGHT! WE'LL HAVE FURRO TAKE A LITTLE COVERTNESS OUT OF HIM!

NOW, I SAY THIS IS GOING TO BE FUN!



THE TWO MEN... THEIR JOB OF REPLACING THE STOLEN CORPSE COMPLETED... SAUNTERED OFF ACROSS THE CEMETERY! THEIR LAUGHTER DRIFTED BACK... ECHOING FROM HEADSTONE TO HEADSTONE...



THE NEXT EVENING, AN HOUR OR SO BEFORE ROGER WAS DUE TO SHOW UP...

THIS IS MR. FIRRO CLYDE! I'VE EXPLAINED MY PLAN TO HIM...

...AND YOU AGREE TO IT?

FOR FIFTY DOLLARS, I'D DO ANYTHING!



AND SO, MADE UP TO RESEMBLE A COFFEE, FIRRO WAS COVERED WITH A SHEET AND PLACED IN A ROOM WITH NO WINDOWS! SOON AFTER, ROGER ARRIVED...

ALL RIGHT, ROGER! THERE'S THE COFFEE! WE DUS UP LAST NIGHT... AND HERE'S A CARD!

REMEMBER, ROGER! IF YOU LEAVE THIS ROOM, YOU FORFEIT YOUR SET...

FAIR ENOUGH!



WELL, COME BACK FOR YOU AT DAY-BREAK!

HAVE A NICE NIGHT!



GOODNIGHT, ROGER!

GOODNIGHT, GENTLEMEN!



ROGER TURNED TOWARD THE ENDOURED FIGURE AND SAID...

THIS IS GONNA BE THE *LARGEST* FIFTY DOLLARS I EVER MADE...



ROGER SAT DOWN IN AN EASY CHAIR AT ONE END OF THE ROOM AND PICKED UP A BOOK...

HAVE! SERVE OF HUMOR THOSE TWO HAVE! 'TALES OF TERROR AND HORROR!' SOUNDS INTERESTING! I THINK I'LL READ A BIT...



BUT, AFTER A FEW HOURS, ROGER BEGAN TO FEEL UNEASY! HE CLOSED THE BOOK...

S-S-S-S-S! THOSE STORIES RIVE ME THE CREEPS! I THINK I'LL TRY TO GET SOME SLEEP! E...E...





THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!



SO? HEE, HEE? WE MEET AGAIN? WELCOME! WELCOME, HORROR FAN! THE FIRE UNDER MY CAULDRON IS LIT... AND EVEN NOW, MY EVIL BREW IS BUBBLING AND BURLING! THIS TIME, I HAVE DOCKED UP A DELIGHTFULLY CHILLING LITTLE MORSEL WHICH I TRUST WILL WARM YOUR COLD HEARTS! COME CLOSER NOW, AND GAZE INTO THE STEAMING CONTENTS OF MY CAULDRON, AS MY STORY UNFOLDS! I CALL THIS SHRE-TILLING TALE...

ESCAPE!



SEE, NOW, A DIMIAL PRISON YARD? OVER IN ONE CORNER, IN THE GREY SHADOW OF A LOOMING CELL BLOCK, A SMALL BAND OF GREY-GLAD CONVICTS STAND BEFORE A TRUCK PILED HIGH WITH BRICKS...

ALL RIGHT, YOU GUYS? GET BUSY AND START UNLOADING THOSE BRICKS AND MAKE IT SNAPPY!



THE BRIBEDLY CONVICTS SET TO WORK AT THE BACK-BREAKING TASK OF REMOVING THE HUGE PILE OF BRICKS FROM THE TRUCK...



LET'S GO, LUGER!

OHAY!
OHAY!

RELUCTANTLY, ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE GREY-CLAD GROUP ROLLS HIS WHEELBARROW UP TO THE TRUCK...



HAY! IF THE BOYS BACK IN THE CITY COULD SEE YOU JAZZ, LUGER...

SHADDAH!
SHREEP!

PETE LUGER HAS ONCE BEEN THE HEAD OF A NATION-WIDE CRIME SYNDICATE...



CRIDER, HAH! DON'T BE SURPRISED IF YOU GET A *PROP-ALZE* IN YOUR *WHEEL*. ONE OF THESE DAYS, LUGER!

CUT IT, YOU BOTS!
THE BLAME'S EVEN YOURS!

AND SO, THE DAY PASSES...AND THE BRICKS WERE ALL UNLOADED AND STACKED NEATLY BESIDE THE CELL BLOCK...



WHERE I'M BEAT...

BY'GOD, LUGER YOU *BOKE* YER LILLY-WHITE HARDS!

OHAY, MEN!
LINE UP!

THE RABBIT SPOUR, THEIR SHIRTS SOAKED WITH SWEAT, LINED UP FOR THE MARCH BACK TO THEIR CELLS...



ANOTHER CRACK LINE THAT, BONE-HEAD, AND YOU'LL BE ONE'EM' ONE OF THOSE *BRACKS*...

HEY, LOOK!

A *HEARDS!*

SLOWLY, THE OBVIOUS BLACK TRUCK PULLED UP BEFORE A SMALL BOOR...



THE PRISON MOROSE!

SOME YARDING WANTS *DROOKED!*

WHAT'S THAT PLACE!

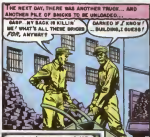
THE DOOR OPENED, AND A SIMPLE PINE BOX WAS CARRIED OUT...



THEY TAKE HIM INTO TOWN AND BURY THE POOR JOE IN 'POTTER'S FIELD'!

UNLESS HIS *FAMILY* WANTS HIM...

...AND *WHOSE* WOULD?



THE NEXT DAY, THERE WAS ANOTHER TRUCK... AND ANOTHER PILE OF BRICKS TO BE UNLOADED...

WASP - BY BACK IS KILLIN' ME! WHAT'S ALL THESE BRICKS FOR, ANYWAY?

DARNED IF I KNOW! - BUILDING, I GUESS!



THAT NIGHT, AS PETE LUGEN, ONE TIME BIG-SHOT, LAY ON HIS PRISON COT...

... HE WENT ANOTHER DAY OF UNLOADING THOSE BRICKS WILL STILL BE!



THEN THEY'LL BE CARRYIN' ME OUTTA HERE IN A PINE BOX, JUST LIKE THEY DID WITH THAT POOR JOE, YESTERDAY...



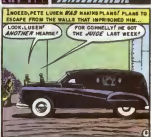
IT'S TERRIFID! WHAT A WAY TO BREAK OUT OF THIS DAMN! SET CARRIED OUT IN A PINE BOX!



THE NEXT DAY, PETE LUGEN FOUND HIMSELF UNLOADING ANOTHER TRUCK-LOAD OF BRICKS... BUT THIS TIME HIS MIND WAS ON OTHER THINGS...

LOOK AT LUGEN! HE'S WORKIN' LIKE A BEAVER!

HE'S FROKIN' ABOUT SOMETHIN' I BEEN THAT LOOK WHEN I WAS WORKIN' FOR HIM! HE'S MAKIN' PLANS!



INDEED, PETE LUGEN WAS HATCHIN' PLANS TO ESCAPE FROM THE WALLS THAT IMPRISONED HIM...

LOOK, LUGEN! ANOTHER HEARD!

FOR CORNELLY HE GOT THE JUDGE LAST WEEK!

AGAIN, A PLAIN PINE BOX WAS CARRIED OUT THE SMALL DOOR, AND LIFTED INTO THE BLACK CARRIER OF THE DEAD...

YEP! CONNELLY'S SON'S "POTTER'S FIELD."



ER... HOW DO YOU GET ASSIGNED TO THE PRISON MORGUE, ED?

ARE YOU *FLYING*? NOBODY WANTS *THAT* JOB! ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS VOLUNTEER! BOOP?

OH, NO THEN? I WAS JUST *WONDERING*!



THE NEXT DAY, PETE LUGER VOLUNTEERED FOR THE JOB OF MORGUE-ATTENDANT AT THE PRISON MORGUE...

ALL RIGHT, BOOP? YOU REPORT TO THE *BRICK* *POLE*? LUGER, HERE, WANTS YOUR JOB!

HE CAN *KEEP* IT! IT'S *REPAIR* *CRACKED* *SHOVES*, ANYTIME!



AND SO, PETE LUGER HAD TAKEN THE FIRST STEP IN HIS INTRIGATE PLAN TO ESCAPE FROM STATE PRISON...

MAN? LOOK AT THOSE POOR SLOBS BREAKING THEIR BACKS ON THAT *JURVE* *PALE*, WHILE I SIT HERE WITH SOME HARMLESS STUFFS...



AND THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THEY'RE *MAKING*? THAT'S THE *PAYOFF*!



A WEEK WENT BY THEN, ONE DAY...

UNLESS HE GETS A LAST MINUTE *REPEVE*, LUGER, THAT *BRICKSON* *BOY* GETS THE *CHAIR* TONIGHT...



RIGHT? YOU'LL KEEP HIM IN THE MORGUE HERE FOR *ONE* *WEEK*? IF NO ONE CLAIMS THE BODY...

I KNOW! OUT HE *BOOP*!





GET SOME TOOLS FROM CARPENTRY AND GET BUSY ON A COFFIN!

OKAY, GUARD! RIGHT AWAY!



THAT NIGHT, LINGER SCRIBBLED A HASTY NOTE TO THE BOYS ON THE OUTSIDE...

...COME VISIT ME. I'M LOWKEY, PETE.



ON THE FOLLOWING VISITING DAY, PETE LINGER'S OLD LIEUTENANT PRED A CALL.

WHAT'S UP, PETE?

I'M BREAKIN' OUT! I GOT A PLAN... AND YOU GUYS GOTTA HELP!



EVERYWAY OF THE GUARDS THAT FACED THE VISITING ROOM, PETE UNFOLDED HIS PLAN...

...AND WHEN THE HEARSE PULLS OUT OF THE PRISON GARD, YOU TRAIL IT! AT A SAFE SPOT... TAKE OVER! I'LL BE IN THE COFFIN...

IN THE COFFIN!



YEAH? DON'T ASK QUESTIONS! JUST FOLLOW MY INSTRUCTIONS! TOMORROW, KEEP A SHARP WATCH FOR THE HEARSE!

OKAY, LINGER! TIME'S UP!



PETE LINGER WENT BACK TO THE MORPHINE AND BAZED OUT OF THE WINDOW...

HMMMM! THEY'VE ALMOST COMPLETED WHATEVER IT IS THEY'RE BUILDING! LOOKS LIKE A CHIMNEY!



SHREKIN' HAWKIN' THOSE BRICKS WHILE I SIT AROUND HERE! AND TOMORROW... HAW... I GET OUT!

THE NEXT DAY...

GET BREYSON INTO HIS COFFIN, LASER? TWO MEN WILL BE HERE TO PICK HIM UP AT TWO O'CLOCK SHARP!

O.K., GUARD! TWO O'CLOCK!



PETE MOVED THE CRUDELY MADE COFFIN INTO THE CENTER OF THE ROOM.

THEY'LL NEVER FIND WHAT'S LEFT OF BREYSON...



AND THEN... HE CLIMBED IN...

WHAT A PLAN! BRILLIANT! BRILLIANT!



AT TWO O'CLOCK, TWO CONVICTS ENTERS...

HEY, LASER? WE...

HE ISN'T AROUND!



WUSTA NEXT TO CHOW? WELL! BRAB AN' BRO!

WATE LOOKS! THE COFFIN.



S' BATTER!

IT AIN'T NAILED DOWN!



QUICKLY, THE CONVICT REACHED FOR THE HAMMER AND NAILS...

LEAVE IT TO LUGER TO LEAVE A JOB UNFINISHED... THE CRUMP!



DEAR, JAKE? LET'S GOT GRAB AN END!

YEAH! ONLY A FEW MORE MINUTES...



...THEN... FREEDOM!

I KNOW, I ALWAYS WONDERED WHAT THAT WAS BY THESE BUILDING WITH THOSE BRICKS...



YEAH! SO DO I!



THE HEAVY IRON DOOR BLAMMED SHUT! THE ROAR OF THE FLAMES MUFFLED LUGER'S FREEDOM CRIES...

A CREMATORIUM? WHO'DA THOUGHT IT?

YEAH! I NEVER FIGURED IT...



HEH... HEH? WELL, KIDDIES? NEITHER DID PETE LUGER! HE WAS SURE HE HAD A HOT IDEA! I'LL BET HE'S ALL BURNED UP ABOUT IT NOW, THOUGH? WELL, IT

ONLY GOES TO SHOW, DON'T COUNT YOUR BRICKS BEFORE THE BUILDING IS MADE... OR IT MIGHT BACK FIRE, HEH-HEH... AS IT DID ON POOR PETER! I HOPE MY LITTLE TRICK FOR THIS ISSUE SCORCHED YOU! I'LL TRY TO HAVE ANOTHER HEART-WARMER NEXT ISSUE! BYE, NOW, AND DON'T FORGET TO WRITE TO THE MALT-KEEPER AND LET HIM KNOW WHAT YOU THINK OF... ANEH... OUR BOOK... HEH, HEH!



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NO. 6
JAN

THE VAULT OF



200
2ND
CANADA

HORROR

FEATURING



THE
MURDERER



THE
MURDERER



THE
MURDERER

GOOD LORD... WHAT'S
HAPPENING TO MY ARM??
THEY'RE SWELLING! THEY
LOOK... LIKE AN ANAKAPY!



THE VAULT OF HORROR!



ALONG THE BUMPY, BUTTER ROAD
THAT WINDS THROUGH THE GREEN
ENGLISH MOORS, A LONE CAR
TWOHUNDRED MILES TO THE WEST. THE CAR
DESPERATELY TO FIND SAFE PAS-
SAGE THROUGH THE DENAR, UN-
PREDICTABLE FOR BEHIND THE WHEEL,
BUT THE STAY, AN AMERICAN TOURIST.



BLAST THE FORT! CAN'T SEE A THING! I'VE
GONE OFF THE ROAD FROM TOWN! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE
TO GO ANY FURTHER! DON'T EVEN KNOW
WHERE I AM, ANYMORE!



WWW... THIS SATE
LOOKS LIKE THE
STRANGE TO AN
IDEAL. GOOD
THING I STOPPED
WHEN I DID! WAVE
THEY'LL PUT ME
UP FOR THE NIGHT.



Jim was found
his way to an
Ancient mystery
place. The book
was opened to his
knowledge, and an
angel, King Butler
invited him
into the presence
of Andrew
Clymore...

... AND WITH THE ROAD SO
DANGEROUS BECAUSE OF
THE FOG, MR. CLYMORE,
I THOUGHT PERHAPS...



OF
COURSE,
MR.
RYAN...

WE HAVEN'T HAD A GUEST IN
OVER TWENTY YEARS! THERE WAS
I LIVE HERE ALONE! HOWEVER, WE
WELL, BE GLAD TO HAVE YOU
SPEND THE
NIGHT...



DINNER IS
SERVED, MR.
CLYMORE...

... YES, MR. RYAN, I AM
AN OLD MAN WITH NOT
MUCH TIME LEFT!
SOMEONE MUST
ATTACK WILL, MEAN
THE END...



I'M
VERY
SORRY
TO HEAR
THAT, MR.
CLYMORE!

Suddenly, from out of the same doorway of the
house, came a thrill, a presence, and a scene.

SCOTT SCOTT!
WHAT WAS THAT?



I HEARD NOTHING, MR.
RYAN. WHAT SEEMS TO
BE THE MATTER?

NO... YOU DIDN'T
HEAR THAT, THAT
IS... I'M... IT MUST
HAVE BEEN MY
IMAGINATION...





"I'M... I'M SORRY, MR. CLYDE? I'M VERY TIRED. SURE, SURE. I SURE..."

"OF COURSE! IF YOU'VE PERFORMED BRAVELY, I'LL SHOW YOU TO YOUR ROOM!"



"GOOD-NIGHT, MR. EGAN. I TRUST YOU SLEEP WELL!"

"THANK YOU! I WISH YOU GOOD NIGHT!"

EVERYONE PAUSED FOR ONLY A MOMENT... BUT IT WAS LONG ENOUGH FOR AN EYEBALL TO SWELL THE UNBUILT DOOR THAT GAVE FROM THE COVERED PLATTER. IT WAS A STRONG, NAUSEATING SWELL... LIKE THE STENCH OF DECAYED ROTTER *FLANZ*!



"WHAT AN UNGHOSTLY DOOR? AND THOSE STRANGE WHISPERS SOUND FROM BEHIND IT..."

"HERE IS YOUR ROOM, MR. EGAN!"



"I'LL ASLEEP SOON! BUT SOME HOURS LATER... *SCREEE!* THOSE HORRIBLE SHRIEK! COMING FROM ACROSS THE HALL! WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE?"



"SOUNDS LIKE AN AIRPLANE... STEERING AND SHAKING! AND YES... IT SOUNDS ALMOST ALIEN! WHAT EVER IS IN THERE IS MAKING A TERRIFIC RACKET!"



"SEEMS TO BE SCRATCHING... COULD BE SOMETHING! AND IT'S FOUNDING ON THE WALL... ON THE WALL BETWEEN GARY'S ROOM AND MR. CLYDE'S!"

STRAIGHT... I FEEL I NEED SOME
FRESH AIR... MR. OLSON'S ROOM?
BUT I... I CAN'T BE SURE...
IT? I HOPE HE'S ALL RIGHT!



UNWELL, JIMMY RETURNED TO BED HE SLEPT LITTLE, AND
WAS FULLY AWAKE WHEN THERE WAS A PUNISHING POUND ON HIS
DOOR THE NEXT MORNING. THE NOISE FROM BEHIND THE HILL
HAD CEASED...

EVERYONE'S
THE MATTER?

MR. OLSON'S DEAD? MR. OLSON IS
DEAD? A HEART ATTACK DURING THE
MEETING PLEASE COME?



HE'S DEAD
ALL RIGHT?
LOOKS LIKE
HE WAS
PREPARING
TO DEATH!

A LONG TIME AND HE MADE ME
PROMISE TO ORGANIZE HIS BODY
WHEN HE DIED, MR. OLSON I WANTED
TO ASK YOU THIS... BUT I AM OLD
I... I CAN'T DO IT ALONE...



I... I UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING
YOU WANT ME TO BUILD THE
FUNERAL PYRE? OK, I'LL
DO IT... AS SOON AS IT
STOPS RAINING!

AS RAIN? OH...
I... I HAVEN'T NOTICED
YES, I GUESS
WE'LL JUST HAVE
TO WAIT!



YOU LOOK
DISSTRESSED,
EVERY
ANYTHING
WRONG?

WRONG? NO... I
ONLY FEEL THE
RAIN STOPS
STOP? IT SHOULD
STOP SOON!
IT SHOULD!



THE SKY DARKENED SUDDENLY, THE
HOURS DRIFTED BY AND THE
TORRENTS OF RAIN CONTINUED!



IT'S BETTING
DARE, EVERYONE
MAYBE WE
CAN CREATE
HIS CORPSE
TODAY!
BUT NOT TO
TAKE A RISK!

BUT NO, I
CAN'T LEAVE
HIM ALONE?
IT'S BETTING
DARE!



SOUNDING FROM THE MYSTERIOUS ROOM NEXT DOOR, HEARD THE SOUNDS OF MOVEMENT. FIRST, LOW GROWLS AND GRUNTS... AND THEN THE SCRAPING, SLAMING SOUNDS OF CONSTRUCTIVE COLLAPSE.



NOTHING WAS SAID THE MOTHER STIFFERED... HE FELL A BRUTAL PAIN... AND BEARS OF GREAT STOOD OUT ON HIS BROW. HE WAS IN DEEPLY FEAR, BUT HE REMAINED BY THE SCULPTURE FIDELITY AT THE WALL FROM WHICH THE BOUNDS CAME! WITH EACH BOUND, THE HEAVY AIR...



THE BIRD STOPPED... EVEN, IT'S LATE... BUT SAYING I CAN BUILD THE FUNERAL PYRE NOW... IF YOU WANT ME TO!

AND HOW NOW?



YOUR PLACE IS BURNING ME BUT WHAT'S YOURS? YOURS, ANSWER!

...ALL RIGHT, MR. BIRD! IT'S NOT EASY TO KEEP IT FROM YOU ANY LONGER! I'LL TELL YOU THE STORY...



"IT BECAME A LONG TIME AGO" MR. BIRD'S WIFE WAS A MOTHER OF CALISTO! WHENEVER SHE TOOK A PIC, SHE'D BE AS IF DEAD FOR YEARS. YOU'VE HEARD OF SUCH CASES?"



FINALLY A MY BIRD'S NEW FROM WHICH SHE DID NOT ANSWER! DATE PASSED! SHE WAS PROBOUNDED DEAD... AND WAS BURIED IN THE FAMILY CRYPT BEHIND THIS HOUSE!



"THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, MR. BIRD'S HEARD BOUND COMING FROM THE MIDDLE. HE RUSHED IN AND BURNED OFF HIS WIFE'S BODY IN 'SHE' WAS ASHES! BUT SHE WAS IN A STATE OF VERY SEVERE SHOCK!"



SHE NEVER FULLY RECOVERED FROM THAT EXPERIENCE. INSTEAD? A YEAR LATER, THEY HAD THEIR FIRST AND ONLY CHILD! IT WAS THEN THAT MR. CLAYTON RECALLED EVERYTHING... THAT THE THERE WAS NO MESSAGE!



THE CHILD WAS A REVOLUTIONARY DISCOVERY! NO ONE WAS ALLOWED TO SEE IT... NOT EVEN MYSELF! WE ALWAYS WITHDREW FROM THE WORLD!



HE BREWERED THE HOUSEHOLD STAFF, AND CARED FOR THE CHILD THERE IN SECLUSION. AS IT GREW OLDER, IT BECAME VICIOUS... AND TRYING PUT IT IN THAT ROOM AND SEE THAT GOOD BUILT TO HOLD IT... WE DESTROYED THE KEY.



SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, THE MONSTER UNDERWENT AN HORRIBLE METAL CHANGE! IT WOULD NOT ONLY BEAR FLIGHT... IT HAD ACQUIRED A BRAIN!



TOGETHER WE HAVE LEFT IT ALIVE BY FEEDING IT DELICIOUS CORPSES FROM THE MAUSOLEUM. BUT NOW NOW THE MONSTER IS STRIVING THROUGH THE WALL! WE'D BETTER GO GET GO!



IT WILL SOON BOOBBLE! YOU CAN FEEL BY THE SHAKES! ANY TIME NOW IT WILL BURST THROUGH! IF NOT TOMORROW, TOMORROW NIGHT! I CAN'T STAND IT MUCH LONGER!



EVERY! GET HOLD OF YOURSELVES! LEARN TO MANAGE THESE NEW WEAPONS WE CAN USE!

YES, GOOD. IN THE MIDDLE! TWO, TWO PEOPLE! LOOK!



THE WALL! IT'S BREAKING OPEN!

JIM RYAN RACED TO THE BUREAU AND SEARCHED FRANTICALLY UNTIL HE FOUND THE PISTOL...

"WHY'D YOU FLAKED ME?"

"NEVER! A GUN? GIVE ME A GUN! IT'S OUTSIDE AT IT! LOOK AT IT!"



THE MONSTER WROU UPON THE LITTLE BUTLER IN AN INSTANT! THEY WENT DOWN IN A TUMBLING MASS OF TRASHING LIDS AND FRINGED, TERRIFIED CUSHIONS. JIM RAISED HIS GUN, TOOK GOOD DELIBERATE AIM, AND SQUEEZED THE TRIGGER!



JIM FELL BACKWARDS, TRYING TO DODGE THE MUTILING FORM, AND HIS HEAD STRUCK THE WALL. DISRUPT THE ROOM REVEALED SMOKE VOLVES SWARMING FOR HIM. THE BEAST, CRASHING OVER THE BOLT IN THE SP- GANGLER'S GETTING FIRE TO THE BOLT - THREE BLACK- WESS.



RYAN WHIRLED AND STARTED AT THE MOST HORRIBLE BEING HE HAD EVER SEEN! IT WAS BEYOND DESCRIPTION - BEYOND THE MOST FANTASTIC APPEARING IN HIS WILDEST NIGHTMARES! EVERY INSTANT A GUN PROMPTED HIM AND FIRED BLINDLY...



AND FURIOUS AND UNHAPPY! IT WAS TOO LATE TO FIRE AGAIN, FOR THE CRIMINAL THING SLITHERED ACROSS THE FLOOR AND, WITH A SWIFT PUSH OF ITS HUGE ARMS, LEAPED UPON HIM!



HE DISGAGED HIS SHOULDERS IN A FEW INSTANTS! SMOKE FILLED HIS RETRIBS, AND THE GRAGGLE OF PLANES, HIS EARS. HE SAW THE MONSTER FLITTING WILDLY ABOUT THE GARAGE - BRATCHING AT ITS FACE REPLEN- DONLY WITH JARRED TEETH.



THE FLAMES RAGED MADLY ABOUT THE ROOM-FLOOR-
 HE FROM THE BIRD'S FEATHERS, JIM CRASHED TO THE
 SIDE OF THE HILLARY!



"SHIRT
 STAYS?"

"WET... HE
 HE'S DEAD!"

HE TURNED JUST IN TIME TO SEE THE HORROR-GRAT-
 TURE, WITH, LEAP FROM THE BED AND, DOWNSIDE
 FRANKLY, SCREAMED BACK INTO THE HOLE IN THE
 WALL... THROUGH THE FLAMES LICKING THE BED-
 DUSTING, JIM STARED IN HORROR AT THE MUTILATED
 REMAINS OF MR. OLSON...



"GOOD LORD! THAT...
 THAT THING WAS...
 FEASTING ON... ON
 HIS FATHER?"

SUDDENLY JIM NOTICED BARRI-
 ERS SWIRLING FALLING FROM THE
 CEILING WITH A THUNDEROUS
 NOISE THE ROOF COLLAPSED JUST
 AS HE DARTED THROUGH THE
 BLAZING CORRIDOR...



LUNGE ACHING AND EYES SWIR-
 LING FROM THE FURIOUS BURN, HE
 STUMBLER DOWN THE STAIRS AND
 OUT OF THE HOUSE... THE WID-
 OWER'S FRIGHTFUL, SOUL-SEARING
 SCREAMED OF NIGHTMARE IN
 HIS EAR...



AS JIM WATCHED BARELY, THE
 HOWLING FLAMES ENVELOPED THE
 HOUSE AND RAGED IT TO THE
 GROUND... A MASS OF SMOKING
 RUBBLE! THE PITIFUL, SCREAMS
 GREW WEAVER AND OLSON...
 UNITS, HE HEARD FROM HIS MOUTH!



FOR A LONG WHILE AFTER THE LAST BURNER HAD BEEN, HE DID NOT
 MOVE... BUT FINALLY HE STUMBLER TO HIS CAR, BLEED BOUND THE WHEEL
 AND SLOWLY CROUCH AHEAD. HE LOOKED BACK SEVERAL TIMES, UNTIL THE
 DAZZLING REMAINS OF THE HOUSE WERE SWALLOWED BY THE FIRE AND
 DISAPPEARED FROM VIEW.




—THE
 END—

"WHEW! PLEASANTLY I WOULD
 THE SALE LEFT YOU WITH A BURN
 FREE... AND THAT IT AT
 LIVED YOUR... AND... YOUR
 APPETITE? OH, BY THE WAY...
 DON'T FEEL GUILTY FOR THE
 SCREAMER! AFTER ALL, HE DIED WITH
 A HOT MEAT IN HIS TUMMY...
 GOOD ON... GREAT
 NEW MEAT... NEW
 NEW MEAT ON..."



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!



WELL, WELL? HELLO? I SEE IT'S TIME, ONCE AGAIN, TO LIGHT THE FIRE UNDER MY CAULDRON AND SHOW FOR YOU ANOTHER PAGE OF FEAR! THIS TIME I HAVE A STORY GUARANTEED TO SEND SHIVERS UP AND DOWN YOUR SPINE! SO COME CLOSER... COME CLOSER AND GAZE INTO THE BUBBLING CONTENTS OF MY CAULDRON... AND SOON YOU'LL SEE THE BEGINNING OF THE TALEN I CALL...

BABY...IT'S COLD INSIDE!

AS MY STORY BEGINS, WE SEE BARTON BORDON, HUNGED AND UNWEPT, STRUGGLING THROUGH A BLINDING SNOWSTORM... A NEWSPAPER CLUTTERED UNDER HIS ARM...

"I'VE ALREADY COME TO MY LAST TENT, I'D NEVER GO OUT ON A DAY LIKE THIS TO ACQUIRE A NEW...!"



SOON, BARTON BORDON CAME TO A RUN-DOWN APARTMENT BUILDING HE DECIDED THE NEWSPAPER...

"THIS IS THE HOUSE?" IT SEEMS TO APPLY BY THE APARTMENT ON THE TOP FLOOR...



OSWALD ENTERED THE RAINBOWLY
BUNGALOW AND BEGAN TO CLIMB
THE OAK PICKET STAIRS

LOOKS LIKE I'M LETTING MYSELF
IN FOR A PILE OF WORK! THIS
PLACE IS PRETTY BEAT UP.



GLORIOUS! AS HE PRESSED A DOOR ON
THE SECOND FLOOR, IT CRASHED OPEN!

ARE YOU THE
NEW SUPERVISOR?

I... I'M APPLYING
FOR THE JOB!



WE'RE BUCKIN' BARRON?
HE SAYS HE GOTTA ANY
HEAT SINCE HE BOUGHT
THE PLACE A WEEK
AGO...

WHAT?
THE
LANDLORD?



YET BEING HIS WINDOWN WARD,
OSWALD HIS APARTMENT IS
FREEZEY! HE SAYS HE
WANTS IT LIKE THAT!
BUT WE... WE HAVE TO
SUFFER!



IF I GET THE JOB,
YOU'LL HAVE HEAT!
I'LL SEE TO IT!



OSWALD MADE HIS WAY TO THE TOP FLOOR AND
KNOCKED ON THE DOOR. A STRANGE VOICE
CAME OUT...

W-H-A-T? THE OLD GUY WAS
READY? IF AS FREEZEY AS HERE!
CAN'T BE MORE THAN TWENTY
DOLLARS?



LOOKS LIKE
HE'S HEARTY!
DON'T JUST STAND
THERE! CLOSE
THE DOOR!

OSWALD ENTERED THE PINK APARTMENT! BEFORE HIM
STOOD THE LANDLORD... A BUBBLY, CRACKLING MAN! AND
THE STRANGEST PART WAS HIS HAIR... SHAGGY AND A
LITTLE YELLOW...

YOU ARE APPLYING FOR THE JOB OF
SUPERVISOR AT MY BUILDING,
IS THAT RIGHT?



YEP! BUT... THE
OTHER TENANTS
ARE COMPLAINING.
YOU DO NOT HAVE
THEM ALL HEAT?

I... I DON'T LIKE FURNACE? THEY
THEY FURNACE? NO! THAT'S NOT
PROOF JOB! THE PAY IS GOOD? YOU
WILL HAVE A PLACE TO LIVE IN
THE BUILDING? THERE'S ONLY ONE
OTHER THING I CAN'T LEAVE
MY APARTMENT! YOU WILL DO AN
EXCELLENT SHOPPING FOR ME!



I WOULDN'T
TAKE THE
JOB, IF I
DON'T NEED
THE MONEY!
I... I DON'T
LIKE THE
SET UP? HOW
EVEN?

HOWEVER BARTON HAD TO TAKE THE JOB AS CHARGING THE NESS-BARY FIRE. AND SOON ALL THE BARBERS IN THE HOUSE WERE SCREAMING THAT IT WAS EXCEPT THOSE OF BARBER KIMBLEY. THE SCOTTISH LANDLORD HIS APPOINTMENT HADN'T BEEN KEPT BY HIS BARBERS WHO'D SHOT OFF HIS WINDOWS WERE OPEN!



"YOUR BARBERS, THANK YOU, BARTON? SET DOWN FOR A WHILE?"

"NO THANK YOU, SIR! I'M NOT A FREEDOM FIGHTER LIKE YOU ARE! I PREFER MY OWN APARTMENT IN THE SKYLINE WHERE IT'S WIDE AND WARM!"

"BUT WHAT'S A LITTLE COLD? IT WILL WARM YOU! BE CAREFUL!"



BARTON HADN'T SAID THE OTHER MAN WAS HIS EMPLOYER! THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT HIM? SOMEONE... YES... FRIGHTENING! BUT A MORAL COURAGE MADE HIM ACCEPT KIMBLEY'S INVITATION...

"YES, BUT... HERE, IN THE WILD, I WOULDN'T THE FEELS WOULD STAY TO MYFIGHTERS?"

"DO YOU PLAY GAMES, MR. BARTON?"



AS THEY TALKED, BARTON NOTICED A MAN THAT KIMBLEY WOULD IT WAS APPOINTMENT MADE... A WORK OF ART...

"BUT WHAT IS INTERESTING HERE? MAY I...?"

"DON'T TOUCH ME!"



BARTON, STARTLED BY BARBER KIMBLEY'S STRANGE, FROM BARTON THEN HE TURNED TO GO...

"BUT DON'T LEAVE! I'M WORRY I WOULDN'T BE HERE? BARTON? IF HE GOES THAT I TALK TO BARTON?"

"... I SHOULD GO! THE BEST SOME MORE TO GO!"



BARTON CLOSED THE DOOR OF THE OLD APARTMENT AND MADE HIS WAY TO THE BARBERS.

"DON'T TOUCH! LIVING IN FREEDOM TEMPERATURE! NOT LETTING ANYONE TOUCH ME! BE AS FREE!"



AND TO THE WATER
DAYS WENT BY? BARTON
GORDON STEERED CLEAR
OF THE STRANGE MAN
KNOWLEDY WHO LIVED IN
THE GOLDEN THE TOP
FLOOR? HE DID HIS WORK
DID IT WELL? THE OTHER
TENANTS WERE KEPT
WARM AND COZY? THEN,
ONE CLEAR DAY LATE
IN FEBRUARY...

WHAT IN THE WORLD...? A TRUCK PARKED
OUTSIDE? (SEE AIR-CONDITIONING AND REFRIG-
ERATION?) WHAT A TIME OF THE YEAR
TO HAVE AIR-CONDITIONING INSTALLED?

AS BARTON WATCHED, THE WORKMEN
CARRIED CRATES AFTER CRATES OF THE
SERIES TO THE TOP FLOOR! THEY
WORKED FOR HOURS, DAYS UP
THERE? HE COULDN'T HEAR THE HAM-
MERS... THE DRILLING...

ALL THIS TWENTY-THREE
DAYS TO INSTALL AIR-
CONDITIONING IN
OUR DOOR?

IT'S
STRANGE...
ISN'T
IT?

HE'S CLEARLY ANGRY, GORDON STOPPED ONE OF
THE WORKMEN AS HE CAME DOWN THE STAIRS...

ARE YOU FINISHED
INSTALLING MY KING-
DALEY'S AIR-CONDITIONING
SET?

AIR-CONDITIONING, YES! BUT
THE SET'S QUALITY IS A
LOSS! WE'VE JUST
INSTALLED FROZEN-FOOD
LOOKER-CONSERVATORS!
THE SET'S MADE MY APPLES
NEED INTO A ROAST FROZEN-
FOOD-LOOKER!

THE WHITED RUBBER AND SPRING CAME TO THE
STAIRS WOULD BE MARCHING IN MARCH! AND WITH THE
WARM WEATHER, SAME THE STRAIN THROUGHOUT OF
MARCHES...
MR. GORDON? I CAN'T BELIEVE!
THE NECESSARY PROVISIONS...
IT'S DIVING ME DEAD?

I'LL SPEAK TO HIM,
MR. GORDON? I'LL SEE
WHAT I CAN DO?

BARTON GORDON MADE HIS WAY UP TO THE TOP FLOOR
TO MARCUS ANIBALE'S APARTMENT! THE GOLD BRAY
OF AIR THAT ESCAPED OUT FROM UNDER THE DOOR SENT
A SHIVER UP HIS SPINE! HE REMEMBERED...

AND MR. GORDON? I HAVE NOT
SEEN YOU IN SUCH A LONG TIME!
YOU LEAVE MY FOOD AT THE
DOOR, BUT NEVER COME IN...

I... I AM
SUSCEPTIBLE TO
COLDS! I CAN'T
STAND THE CHANGE
IN TEMPERATURE!

THE GOAL OF THE UNLAWFUL APARTMENT WAS
BARTON'S HOME! IT MADE HIM GET TEARY OUTSIDE.
IT WAS HARD AND UGLY... BUT IN THERE...

THEY'RE THE MARCHING OF MARCHES! LET THEM
AND TENANTS ARE COMPLAINTS!
IT'S FROZEN AND FROZEN
CONTINUOUSLY!

I'LL GO WHAT
I LIVE IN MY
OWN HOUSE!



HAVE YOU NO HEART, MR. KIMBLEY?

A-HA! A-HA-HA
HA HA HA HA!



MARION KIMBLEY THREW BACK HIS HEAD AND LAUGHED! IT WAS AN EYE-FOR-AN-EYE, HANDS-TO-HANDS... SPILL! BARTON SCORCH COULD STARE IT SO LONGER! HE SLIPPED FROM THE FREEDING APARTMENT...

I'VE GOT TO GET MYSELF ANOTHER JOB! THE WAR IS A BUSTLE!



BUT JOHN WERE SCARCE! BARTON SCORCH REMAINED SPRING-TURNED TO SLAMMER, HOT, HURD, THE PERIPHERALS THAT BOWLED IN THE MIMETIC! AND THE THROBBING! THE DABBLED PERFORMANCE OF THE MACHINERY!



THEN, ONE SMELTERING OUT

MOON! THE MACHINERY! IT'S STOPPED!



MARION KIMBLEY WAS HEAVY BREATHING ABOUT HIS APARTMENT... HARRING HIS... FORCING, CURSING! THEN, HE OPENED HIS DOOR...

BARTON! BARTON! COME UP HERE!

YES, MR. KIMBLEY! AT ONCE!



WHAT'S HAPPENED? WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE ELEC-TRICITY? BY COMPASSION, THEY'RE STOPPED!

I'LL BEAT I'LL LOOM AT THE PRESS!



BARTON RUSHED TO THE CELLAR! THE FUSES WERE ALL BLOWN! AND THE WHEELS... GARGOLES! AS WHAT BLOW UPWARD! KIMBLEY WAS WIDE-STEED WITH FUROR...

THE WHOLE ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS BURNED OUT! COULDN'T TAKE THE LOAD!

FIX IT! FIX IT, BARTON!



IT WILL TAKE JOOP? TO REPLACE MR. KINCHLEY!

MR. JOOP? ISN'T HE DEAD? THERE'S NOBODY ELSE!



BARTON RETURNED TO THE CELL... HE TRIED OTHER LINES! THEY WERE ALL BURNED OUT! IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE! HE WENT BACK UPSTAIRS...

HE ACCIDENTALLY WARMED UP! THERE'S NO MORE GOLD BLAST BEING UNDER THE BOOM! IT'S LOOSE! THE BOOM'S LOCKED!



BUT THEN HE SMELLED IT! AN OOR LIKE WET PAPER... OLD... MUSTY! THE SMELL OF DEATH!

MR. KINCHLEY OPEN THE DOOR! I I CAN'T FIND THE ELECTRICITY! IT IT'S GONE TO TAKE SEVERAL DAYS!

THERE NO NEED AND LEAVE ME ALONE!



SUDDENLY THERE WAS A BLOOD-COURSE! BARTON? THEN BARTON SCROOH HEARD A THUD... AS IF A BOOM HAD FOLLEN FROM JOOP? HE LISTENED... IT WAS BARON KINCHLEY! HE WAS SCREAMING! BARTON WENT DOWNSTAIRS!

IS THIS THE HOME OF BARON KINCHLEY?

YES! BUT HE WILL SEE NO ONE! HE'S LOCKED HIMSELF IN!



WHAT IS WRONG?

I DON'T KNOW! HE IS SCREAMING LIKE A BABY! SINCE HIS REFRIGERATOR-COMPRESSOR STOPPED...



WOULD HE BELIEVE BARTON HAD FAILED TO "BLOOD JOOP?" THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE! CAN YOU FIX IT? IT IS OF EXTREME IMPORTANCE!

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE! PERHAPS IN TWO DAYS...



IT WILL BE TOO LATE! HE WILL BE DEAD! DEAD! THAT IS THE WORST WORD TO USE! BARON KINCHLEY IS DEAD! HAS BEEN FOR SOME TIME! HE STOPPED BY JOOP? WILL-POWER!

DEAD? BUT JOOP? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?



TAKE ME TO HIS APARTMENT? I WILL TELL YOU ON THE WAY!

UP THESE STAIRS!



MARCUS AND I WERE FRIENDS? HE DID NOT HAVE LONG TO LIVE... **GUARDIAN OF THE HEART?** MARCUS HAD A THEORY THAT A MAN COULD SO ON LIVING WITHOUT A HEART... ON PURE DETERMINATION ALONE? YOU KNOW BIRD OVER WATER?



HE BEGGED ME TO CUT OUT THE DANGEROUS HEART? I DID! AND HE CONTINUED TO LIVE! BUT WE SOON DISCOVERED THAT HE WOULDN'T HAVE TO STAY IN COLD TEMPERATURES IF HE WERE TO... TO REMAIN ALIVE? YOU SEE... MARCUS' BODY... IS IT ANY NEAR BODY... WAS PRONE TO DECAY?



THAT'S IT? HE BOUGHT THIS HOUSE IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER, AND FURNISHED HIS APARTMENT WITH A REFRIGERATION UNIT CAPABLE OF PRESERVING HIS DEAD BODY.

THIS IS HIS APARTMENT? LOOK!



ON THE FLOOR, SEEPING OUT FROM UNDER MARCUS KIMBLETT'S DOOR, WAS A POOL OF BLACK LIQUID, AND FROM IT, THE MAINTENANCE MEN OF DECAYING FLESH WOULD...

WELL, AM YOU LATE? I SEE IT IS ALMOST OVER THE DOOR!

YES, AM?



BARTON EDGROVE OPENED THE DOOR AND STOPPED HARD! THE FULL STORM THAT HUNG FORTH ALMOST OVERCAME THEM! THERE ON THE FLOOR WAS ALL THAT REMAINED OF MARCUS KIMBLETT! A MASS OF DECAYED FLESH, PUTRID, BANGING - SOUND, WITH A BLACK POOL THAT TRICKLED OUT THROUGH THE DOORWAY.

I... I THINK I'M GOING TO BE SICK...



WELL, YES? AND THAT'S BY TELLING DEAR READERS? I WISH IT DIDN'T LEAVE YOU FEELING TOO UNCOMFORTABLE? MARCUS CERTAINLY WAS A DULL CHARACTER... LIVING ON UNDER WILD POWER? BUT THEN, BECAUSE - WITH THE POWER FAILURE, HE LOST ALL HIS ABILITY? LITERALLY WENT TO PIECE? WELL... NEXT TIME YOU GO TO YOUR REFRIGERATOR FOR... THINGS OF MARCUS AND HOW HAPPY HE WOULD HAVE BEEN IN THERE? 'BYE NOW!

COME WITH ME TO A PEACEFUL VILLAGE DISTURBED ONLY AT NIGHT BY THE PIERCING HOWLS AND MADENED SCREAMS OF...



THE BEAST OF THE FULL MOON!

THE NIGHT IS FILLED WITH STAGGERING AS A FULL MOON CASTS BRIMMING RAYS ON A BEAST OF TERROR



THE WEREWOLF!
THE --JAGAW

NEXT MORNING, A FRIGHTENED FATHER BRING HIS FIANCÉ



TOMMY TOMMY
ANOTHER WEREWOLF
MURDER LAST NIGHT AND
ONE IS SAFE SAY MORE...
TOM, WHAT'S THE MATTER?

GOOD LORD
LOOK!



SLAM SHUT, LEAVING TO YOUR DOOR? WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

THEY COULD HAVE BEEN MADE BY MY BROTHER ANDREW, OR HE MIGHTY TRY TO GUESS HE WAS BARRAGED BY A WEREWOLF. THE WOLF'S BLOOD MAY HAVE INFECTED HIM!



EACH TIME THE FULL MOON COMES UP, HE DISAPPEARS FROM THE HOUSE! HAS SOME ACTION NIGHTY SUBSEQUENT? I COULD ONLY BE SURE.

FOR, THERE HE IS!



TERIBLY ANDREW BELLOWS TRIED TO ASSURE HIS BROTHER.

ANDREW! I WANT TO TALK TO YOU!

LET ME ALONE! LET ME BE!



YOU'RE GOT TO HEAR ME OUT! WHERE WERE YOU LAST NIGHT?

HONK OF YOUR BUSINESS?



IF YOU KEEP PESTERING ME, IF YOU KEEP INTERFERING, YOU'LL REGRET IT ALL YOUR LIVING DAYS!

YOU BE CAREFUL! ANDREW... PLEASE!



IN A FLASH ANDREW THREW AWAY THE OTHER SLAM OF A DOOR AS HEARD, FOLLOWED BY THE THUNDER OF A RAY.

HE'S LOCKED HIMSELF IN HIS ROOM? I LOVE YOU, JUNE. I WANT TO MARRY YOU! BUT NOT WHILE THIS IS HASSLING OVER OUR HEARTS...

FOUR TOM! YOUR OWN BROTHER? BUT ARE YOU CERTAIN?



I'VE GOT TO HAVE PROOF, TOM! THERE'LL BE A FULL MOON AGAIN. WHEN ANDREW LEAVES THE HOUSE, I'M GOING TO FOLLOW HIM. I'M GOING TO WATCH HIS EVERY MOVE!

THAT NIGHT, AS A CLEAREING MOON BEGINS TO RISE, A STEALTHY FIGURE SLIPS OUT OF THE BELLOWING WOODS.

HE'S MAKING A CASE FOR THE MOON. THE SPELL OF THE MOON WILL BRING ON THE WEREWOLF TRANSFORMATION!



BUT IN THE WILD TANGLE OF THE STAGNANT THICK...

LOST HIM? AND IT'S COME? THAT'S THE ORIGIN OF A WEREWOLF?

NO! NO!



SUDDENLY, OUT OF THE THICKET, THE WEREWOLF BULLY LEAPS!

NO! NO! GRAB BACK!



IN A DASHY EFFORT, MAN GRAPPLES WITH THE BOW ENTHRALLED!

HE'LL KILL ME! THERE'S JUST ONE MORE IF I CAN!



IN A SECOND, BY SECOND, RAGE WITH CLASH, FOM WHISPS OUT A WEAAPON!



THE FRENCH BAST BOUNDS AWAY... BUT TOM, ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSE, STUMBLES IN PURSUIT.

A GLEAM'S GATHERING THE MOON. HE'LL CHARGE BACK... BEFORE I!



"TOM, WHAT HAPPENED? TOM-BARLINS? I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU EVERYWHERE!"

I MISSED FINDING OUT FOR SURE! WEREWOLF... NOT WRAH!



BUT I WOUNDED HIM IN
THE RIGHT CLASP OF ARMOR
FROM SUCH AN ANGLE THAT
WILL BE PROOF!

HE'S WATCHING
YOU! HE LOOKS
SO FRIGHTENED!



I'VE ANNOYED TOM DASHES INTO THE HOUSE TO
SPEAK TO HIS BROTHER.

I'M GOING TO REST!
I'M VERY TIRED!

ANDREW? LET
ME IN!



AT BREAKFAST...

ANDREW, WHAT'S WRONG
WITH YOUR BROTHER?

I GOT IT... TRYING TO
OPEN MY POCKET
KNIFE!



OUT IT... WITH YOUR KNIFE?
YOU DON'T HAVE KNIFE
SEVERAL DAYS AGO!

I... I BOUGHT A NEW
ONE! AND DON'T WANT
TO SEE IT! JUST
LET ME ALONE!



LATE THAT AFTERNOON...

ANDREW? I'M GOING TO TALK
ANDREW! THE WEDDING ALWAYS
USES THE "MOM" CLAM BREAD
SHOULD IT? TONIGHT HE'LL FALL
ASLEEP THIS BY!



TOWARD DUSK, THE TRAP IS SET.

PERFECT CAMOUFLAGED! WHEN HE
FALLS IN, I'LL BE WAITING FOR HIM
WITH A JAW-LEADER LOADED WITH SILVER
BULLETS! BY OWN BROTHER, BUT
I'LL AGREE TO KILL HIM! THERE'S
NO OTHER WAY!



LATER, AT JANE'S HOUSE:

PLEASE! BE CAREFUL...
TOM! HOW, HOW ARE
YOU PLANNING TO
TRAP HIM?

LET ME WORRY
ABOUT THAT, HOBBY!
EVERYTHING'S ARRANGED!
JUST STAY HOME AND
KEEP YOUR DOORS AND
WINDOWS LOCKED! I
DON'T WANT NOTHING
TO HAPPEN TO TOM!



THEY TOOK BY... AND TOM GOES
ON... BATH WATER... JUMPING!

HE'S MOVING AROUND IN HIS
ROOM... CLIMBING... STARTING?
HE SHOULD BE COMING OUT ANY
MOMENT! I'LL LET HIM GET
AS FAR AS THE PIT... AND THEN



WHILE IN BROWN'S ROOM...

THE MOON... AND
MARCH OF THE MOON?
IT WILL BE VERY BRIGHT
AND APPROPRIATE!



A MOMENT LATER, BROWN TAKES
A BATH... PLEASE!



... AND A HUMAN FORM UNDERGOES A FIERCE
TRANSITION... THE WILD CRY OF A WEREWOLF HEARING
THE SHOT!

HE'S NOT
ALREADY HE THOUGHT ME?
BUT THE TRAP WILL GET HIM!



BUT THE ENRAGED BEAST IS STRUGGLING FOR FREE-
DOM... AND BEFORE THE SUN RISES...

LET GO!
LET...!



THE SUN! CAN'T
REACH... IT!



STILL FORTNIGHTLY TRYING TO
REACH THE CAR, TOM STRUGGLED
FURIOUSLY TO WARD OFF THE
BESTIAL VIOLENCE!



THE WIDOWS CREATURE TUMBLED, BRITANNIA IN HAND,
FROM THE BLASTING BULLET!



IN DEATH, THE WIDOWS BEAST SLOWLY REVERTS ITS HUMAN FORM,
SLOWLY CHANGING FROM THE HOARY CREATURE OF MURDER-NESS TO
A WIFE-LIKE BEAUTY... ASLEEP FOREVER!



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELCOME, DEAR READERS TO THE CRYPT OF TERROR! I SEE IT'S TIME FOR ME TO RELATE ANOTHER OF MY HORROR TALES WHICH I KEEP HERE IN THE CRYPT! THIS TIME, IN ANSWER TO YOUR MANY REQUESTS, I AM GOING TO TELL YOU A CHILLING STORY OF VOODOO! ARE ALL THE WIGGERS LOOKING THE OTHER WAY? I SWEAR THEY'LL BEER! I CALL THIS SCROOD...

VOODOO HORROR!



MY STORY BEGINS IN JAMAICA, THE CENTER OF VOODOON CULTURE! AN AMERICAN-BOSSER GARDNER, IS SEARCHING THROUGH DARK WINDING ALLEYS FOR A BETTER JOB...

AND HERE IS IT! THE PLACE I HAVE TRAVELED ONE THOUSAND MILES TO FIND! THERE'S A LIGHT ON HAND! I'LL GO IN!



GEORGE ENTERS THE
DINING ROOM! THE
WALLS ARE LINED WITH
GARDEN RELICS OF NATIVE
CULTURE! THERE IS AN
AIR OF MYSTERY AROUND
THE PLACE... A FEELING
OF...? AN OLD
NATIVE HAS BEEN
WORKING HIS MAGIC
VERY EARLY THIS
MORNING!



WAT I HELP
YOUR

I HE HEARD THAT YOU SELL
STAYOFF... MAKE
YA HAPPY?



YOU WANT ME TO
MAKE A BIRTH OF YOU...
A FOOOOO JOEY?

YES! I AM
WILLING
TO TRY A
NEW THING!



THE OLD NATIVE BEGINS GEORGE BARBER TO
TOLLING! THEY PROCEED TO THE REAR OF THE
SHOP AND GIVE A LONG FLIGHT OF STORIES...

YOU KNOW OF COURSE,
WHAT FORMER THE
FOOOOO JOEY WILL
MAKE?

YES! I AM HEARD
OF ITS STRANGE
CHARACTERISTICS!



THE ENTER A HEAVILY DECORATED ROOM! THERE IS A DRUM,
DANCE, MERRY SOUNDS... THE COOR OF A TOWN! THE OLD NATIVE
LIGHTS A PIPE SIGNIFICANT BLAGGED SMOKE...

I WILL NEED SOME OF YOUR HAIR,
GLIMPSES... A SPOON OF SWEAT... A FEW
PLUCKED EYEBROWS... SWEAT FROM
YOUR BROW... A BIT OF EAR-WAX...

I UNDERSTAND!



THE OLD MAN POWERS THE STRANGE INGREDIENTS INTO
THE BURNING CONTENTS OF THE POT AND BEGINS TO
CHANT... BEARWILD PERFORMING A BROODING DANCE
ABOUT IT...

MA-NAH! MA-NAH! MA-NAH!
FOOOOO JOEY! FOOOO JOEY!



SOON IT IS OVER! THE NATIVE OLD MAN IN THE TIME
LAPSE... HIS DARK BODY COVERED WITH PERSPIRATION!
HE BREAKS HIS HEADS...

THE LIQUID MUST COOL!
THEN I WILL BE ABLE TO
RE-LO YOUR L. MESSERS! SOME
MAGIC IN THE DRYE IT WILL
BE FOOOOO!



GEORGE BARBER STUMBLED FROM THE SHOP... SHOCKED BY HIS EXPERIENCE! THAT NIGHT, IN HIS HOTEL ROOM, HE THOUGHT AND THOUGHT HE COULDN'T SLEEP! THE SLIMING FIGURE OF THE DANCING NATIVE CAUGHT BEFORE HIM! THE NEXT MORNING HE RUSHED FROM HIS HOTEL, WITH HEAVY SLEEPERS IN HIS...



"... I CAN'T GO THROUGH WITH IT! THAT'S UNACCEPTABLE... UNACCEPTABLE! I... I'M AFRAID I'LL FIND THE SHOP AND CARRY MY WORK!"



BUT BEFORE HE WAS, GEORGE BARBER COULDN'T FIND THE STRANGE NATIVE AND HIS WEIRD SHOP! THROUGH BACK ALLEYS AND TWISTED STREETS HE SEARCHED...

"AM I SOMEWHAT IT WAS HERE? I KNOW IT BUT NOW, IT'S AWAY!"



THE NEXT DAY GEORGE RETURNED AT THE APPOINTED HOUR TO THE SPOT WHERE THE SHOP HAD BEEN! STRANGELY, IT IS THERE, IN THE SAME ALLEY WHERE HE HAD FIRST FOUND IT...



"BUT WHY WOULDN'T IT BE HERE WHEN I LOOKED YESTERDAY?"

WHEN GEORGE BARBER ENTERS THE SHOP? THE OLD NATIVE COMES FORWARD, A STRANGE STATUE UNDER HIS ARM...



"YOU ARE ON TIME? WERE IT NOT YOU, MR. BARBER?"

"COULD IT BE YOU? I DON'T RECALL YOUR NAME? NO... NO LIFE-LIKE!"

THE NATIVE HELD OUT HIS HAND AND GEORGE PLACED THE ARMED JOB IN HIS UPSTRETCHED PALM! THEN HE TOOK THE NATIVE AND LEAVERS AT THE DOOR OF THE SHOP CLOSED BEHIND HIM, HE TURNED...



"WAS I A BARRACK WALL? THE SHOP IS... GONE?"

GEORGE BARBER LEFT HIS AMAZING LIFE-WORK... THE WOODEN BUXT... RETURNS TO AMERICA! ONCE BACK HOME, HE PLACED THE BUXT ON THE MANTLEPIECE OF THE FIRE PLACE IN HIS LUXURIOUS APARTMENT.



PERSHAPS, OVER HIS SOUL, YOU ARE WONDERING JUST WHO? THE STRANGE POWERS ARE THE STRANGE WOODEN STATUE POSSESSORS? LET ME TELL YOU MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN THE WORLD, I SEE THE BARBER SAID HE TOOK, ALMOST IMMEDIATELY! HE FEARED THE DAY THAT THE HANG LINES OF AIR AND WORKER WOULD MARK HIS WANDERING COUNTERPARTS! THAT'S WHY HE BOUGHT THE STATUE! THE BUXT IS SUPPOSE TO PROTECT THESE DAMAGED WHILE GEORGE'S FACE REMAINS YOUR UNWANTED!



THE YEARS PASS... AND WITH THEM, THE SPRAWLING STATE BEGINS TO SHOW SIGNS OF GREAT LIVES OF AGE APPEAR ON ITS FOREHEAD ...

... WHILE I... I REMAIN AS YOUTHFUL AS EVER!



BUT ANOTHER, A STALE STRAWMAN THIS BEGINS TO HAPPEN TO THE STATE? IT NOT ONLY DOES IT SHOW GREEN, WHILE GEORGE REMAINS YOUNG... BUT ALSO IT BEGINS TO LOOK DEPLETED... 1954...

... AS IF IT WERE BORN BY MY IDEAS. MY GRAND AS WELL?



IT IS TRUE? EACH TIME THAT GEORGE BARKER, IN HIS DEALINGS WITH STUBBS, SPINNEY, LEE, CROFT... THE STATE CRANKS...

I'M SURE, BARKER? AS FOR YOU YOU'VE SOLD OUT FROM UNDER ME? MY MONEY, I'M SURE YOU'VE BEEN MORE CAREFUL?



MY GOOD WILL BE ON YOUR SIDE, GEORGE BARKER? YOU WANT AN WILL HAVE PULLED THE TRIGGER YOURSELF?

WELL, YOU FOOL? PUT DOWN THAT GUN!



A MUST FORGE THROUGH GEORGE BARKER'S HAIR OF OFFICE...

WHAT'S HAPPENED, MR. BARKER?

IT'S... WELLS? HE'S COMMITTED SUICIDE!



THEY DON'T WHEN GEORGE BARKER SEES THE STATE ON HIS WANTED LIST...

GOOD GOD? IT... IT'S HORRIBLE? IT... BARKER HE GOT? AND IT... IT'S TURNED GOOD FOR...



AND SO THE YEARS CONTINUE TO GO BY? ONE DAY, A BRITISH YOUNG GIRL ENTERS GEORGE BARKER'S OFFICE ...

... I'M LOOKING FOR FRANK? MY FATHER, MARRIED FRANK?

FRANK? FRANK?



WE'A BOOKKEEPER? OF COURSE! CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE I CAN FIND HIM?

DOWN THE HALL... THE DOOR MARKED 'ACCOUNTS'!



GEORGE WITHDREW AS THE GIRL MOVED GRACEFULLY FROM THE HALL. "SUDDENLY, TAKEN BY HER FAVORABLE LONGING, GEORGE WANTS HER... WANTS HER FOR HIS OWN...



THE NEXT DAY, BANKER GEORGE FOR GEORGE FRANK.

MR FRANK "YOU'VE BEEN WITH THE FIRM FOR... LET'S SEE... TEN YEARS? YOU ARE NOW SIXTY-ONE? THIS JOB MEANS A LOT TO YOU, ISN'T IT?"

WELL, YES... BUT BY MUCH!



THE STRIKE ON THE MARTELLSIDE LOOKS JUST A LITTLE MORE HORRIBLE... A LITTLE MORE DISTURBED THE NEXT NIGHT...



THE GIRL, JEAN FRANK, MAKES NO MOVE TO RESIST AS GEORGE BARRETT TAKES HER IN HIS ARMS...



AND BELIEVE HER AGING FATHER'S
LIE, JEAN FRANK CONSENTS TO
MARRY GEORGE BARRER? IT IS A
SIMPLE CEREMONY, WITNESSED
BY A FEW PEOPLE AND AN ONLY
SUSPECT—LOOKING AWAY.



AGAIN GEORGE BARRER HAD TAKEN
WHAT HE WANTED, AND AGAIN HIS
EVIL IS REFLECTED ON THE FACE
OF THE NOW HEROIC STANLEY...



THE HEARS DRIFT UP JEAN KNOWS
MORE AND MORE TO HELP THE MAN
SHE HAS MARRIED...



GEORGE PUSHES THE WIFE FROM THE
DEN AND LOCKS THE DOOR...

AND STAY
BAR, JEAN?

OUT OF THERE? IF I CATCH YOU BEING
THAT STANLEY AGAIN - I'LL - I'LL



"I'M GOING OUT FOR A WALK"
WHY DON'T YOU GO TO HELP
THE... FORMERLY OLD MAN?"

JEAN?



GEORGE PUTS ON HIS HAT AND GOAT AND LEAVES! HE CROSSES THE STREET AND ENTERS THE DESERTED PARK ...

"I'LL HAVE TO GET RID OF HER! SHE'S NO LONGER ATTRACTIVE... OF NO MORE USE TO ME!" AND SHE'S DETERMINED TO SUSPECT ABOUT THE STRIKE!



MEANWHILE JEANIE WILDLY SEARCHES THROUGH DRAWERS, LOOKING ...

THERE'S ANOTHER KEY AROUND HERE! SOMEWHERE? I'VE SEEN IT! HA, HERE IT IS!



JEAN GOES DOWNSTAIRS AND UNLOCKS THE DOOR TO THE BENT AS IT OPENS, THE LIGHT FALLS UPON THE HORRIBLE SCENE...

"I'VE GOT TO DESTROY IT! IT'S UGLY!"



PICKING UP A LARGE MACHETE, ONE OF THE MANY NATIVE WEAPONS THAT LINE THE WALL OF THE DEN, JEAN BRINGS IT DOWN UPON THE BUILT WITH ALL HER FORCE... BEVERING IT IN TWO ...



OUTSIDE IN THE DESERTED PARK, A BLOOD-DRINKING GORGON SHATTERS THE STRINGS, COMING FROM TREE TO TREE, READY TO SCREAM



A POLICEMAN HEARING THE DREAHTLY CRY, RUSHES TO THE SCENE ...

"LORD? HOW HORRIBLE! IT'S AN UGLY, REVOLTING OLD MAN! KILL IT! TWO ...



AND BACK AT GEORGE BARNETT'S HOUSE

"BUT THIS DREAHTLY STRIKE? IT'S NOT ONLY ANY LONGER! IT LOOKS LIKE ... GEORGE"



AND THAT'S MY VOODOO TALL, BARN BARNER? LIKE IT? I HOPE YOU'VE LEAST IT WAS A SHATTERING SCENE? REALLY? GOOD-SPLITTING! HELD UP? WELL? I'LL SEE YOU ...

BY MY OWN MAKING, TALKS FROM THE GOAT? I'LL BE LOOKING FOR YOU ... WITH MORE HORROR STORIES? BE SURE! AND ONE, WONT YOU!



HOORROR

THE VAULT OF HORROR

FEATURING



STORY BY



ART BY



ILLUSTRATED BY



WISHING WELL

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THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELL, WELL, WELL... THREE HOLES IN THE GROUND AND ALL THAT SORT OF ROT? I HAVE A SKEEP OF A STORY FOR YOU THIS TIME, FRIENDS... FULL OF PASSION, GRIEVE... AND *WAZZ!* HEH, HEH! SO RELAX FOR A WHILE... *OF YOU BARE...* AND READ THE TALE I CALL...

SINK-HOLE!



SIX MONTHS, SHE REFLECTED. SIX LONG, WEARY MONTHS... THE LONGEST MOST MISERABLE MONTHS OF HER LIFE? SHE WAS LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW OF THE RAMSHACKLE FARMHOUSE AT A CLOUD OF DUST FAR DOWN THE ROAD, AND SHE LET HER THOUGHTS DRIFT BACK... BACK TO THE BEGINNING...



TWO YEARS AGO SHE HAD JOINED A 'LONELY HEARTS PEN-PALS CLUB' THAT WAS WHERE (BY MAIL) SHE HAD MET ALDOUS BARNSON...

OH, HE SENT A PICTURE THIS TIME! HE'S NICE LOOKING! AND HIS LETTERS SOUND SO WARM... SO TENDER!



A YEAR OF CORRESPONDENCE HAD FOLLOWED. THE SPELL OF LONELINESS HAD BEEN BROKEN BY THE LETTERS FROM YOUNG, SYMPATHETIC ALDOUS.

HEAVENS! HE WANTS ME TO MARRY HIM AND LIVE ON HIS FARM. HIS BEAUTIFUL, COUNTRY FARM!



SHE HAD ACCEPTED HAPPILY, AND SEVERAL DAYS LATER HAD STEPPED FROM THE TRAIN, FACE TO FACE WITH ALDOUS!

FOUR? ALDOUS? BUT THE PICTURE YOU SENT... I MEAN, IN THE PICTURE YOU... YOU LOOK...



FOUR? WHY, SURE! THAT SNAPSHOT WAS TAKEN MORE'N FIFTEEN YEARS AGO! I WAS GOING TO HAVE A MORE RECENT ONE MADE, BUT THEY COST MONEY!

... OF COURSE...



IT HADN'T REALLY MATTERED TO HER THEN, SHE REMEMBERED. ALTHOUGH HE WAS NO LONGER YOUNG, SHE HAD STIFLED HER MISGIVINGS AS THEY BOUNCED ALONG THE DUSTY ROAD TO THE FARM...



THE 'BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY FARM' TURNED OUT TO BE A GROUP OF DILAPIDATED BUILDINGS SQUATTING ON THE PARCHED, SUNKERED EARTH. IT WAS A TERRIFIC SHOCK TO HER. SHE COULD HARDLY STEP FROM THE FLYVER...



IT WASN'T ONLY THE LOOK OF THE PLACE. IT WAS THE FEEL OF IT! SHE STARED DAZZLED AT THE DINGY, CLAPBOARD FRAME OF HER NEW HOME AND SHUDDERED. IT FELT EMPTY! IT SEEMED LIKE A PLACE WHERE NO ONE LIVED!

ALDOUS! IT... IT'S... LOVELY!

... PREACHER'S WAITING INSIDE! CEREMONY SHOULD NOT TAKE MORE'N A FEW MINUTES! YOU BRING THE BAGS!



AND SO THEY HAD BEEN MARRIED! SHE HAD SENSED IT WOULDN'T WORK OUT, AND HAD BEEN RIGHT! NOW, SIX MONTHS LATER, SHE WATCHED THE SMALL DUST CLOUD MOVE CLOSER... AND TRIED TO HOLD BACK HER TEARS. . .

...PROBABLY MR. FARNSWORTH, THE GOVERNMENT HEALTH INSPECTOR...



...OLD FUDGY-DUDGY FARNSWORTH! SHE DELIBERED THE PRYING OLD FOOL, BUT HE WAS SOMEONE TO TALK TO! AS THE CAR DREW NEARER, SHE SAW THAT IT WASN'T FARNSWORTH! SHE HURRIED OUTSIDE AS THE CAR PULLED INTO THE YARD...



'MORNING! I'M ~~AWAY~~ AWAY FROM THE NEW HEALTH INSPECTOR! I'M TAKING OVER MR. FARNSWORTH'S JOB! ARE YOU MRS. BARSTOW?

WHY...WHY, YES! I'M MRS. BARSTOW! I'M FEELING GLAD TO MEET YOU, MR. HUDSON. COME! I'LL... I'LL SHOW YOU AROUND...



SHE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED! HER FACE FLUSHED... HER BODY TINGLED AT THE NEARNESS OF HIM AS HE CHECKED THE FARM'S SANITARY CONDITIONS...

I... I HOPE EVERYTHING IS ALL RIGHT, MR. HUDSON!

EVERYTHING'S FINE, MRS. BARSTOW!



SHE LIKED THIS MAN WHO HAD SUDDENLY ENLIVENED HER DRAB LIFE. SHE LIKED HIM MORE THAN WAS GOOD FOR A MARRIED GIRL...

WOULDN'T YOU RATHER CALL ME... SHIRLEY?

I GUESS SO! YOU CAN CALL ME RICK!



FINALLY HE HAD TO LEAVE, AND SHE FOUND HERSELF TRYING DESPERATELY TO KEEP HIM FROM GOING...

... BUT WOULDN'T NEXT TIME, YOU LIKE TO HAVE SOME COFFEE? I...

MAYBE

SHIRLEY!

SO LONG!



SHE STOOD THERE LONG AFTER THE CAR HAD DISAPPEARED... UNTIL THE ROISY SPATTERINGS OF ALDOUS' TRACTOR BURST HER THOUGHTS LIKE A PIN TOUCHED TO A BALLOON...

HEAVENS! ALDOUS WILL WANT HIS LUNCH! I DIDN'T REALIZE IT WAS SO LATE!



BACK TO THE ROUTINE! THE FARM CLOSED AROUND HER AGAIN AND HER LIFE WAS AS MISERABLE AS BEFORE...

ALDOUS! I'D LIKE TO HAVE A NEW DRESS... PLEASE...

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THE ONE YOU GOT ON?

WHY... NOTHING? I JUST THOUGHT

YOU THOUGHT WOMEN THINK I'M CRAZY OF MONEY? WHEN YOU NEED A DRESS, YOU'LL GET ONE! NOT BEFORE!

SHE FOUGHT TO CONTROL A FLOOD OF TEARS, BUT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE...

THE MEAN, STINGY OLD SKIMPINT! I HATE HIM! (SOB) HATE HIM!

HE NEVER WANTED A WIFE! HE ONLY WANTED SOMEONE TO COOK, TO SEW, TO CLEAN FOR HIM! IT WAS CHEAPER FOR HIM TO MARRY ME, THAN TO PAY A HOUSEKEEPER! (SOB)

...I WISH I COULD GO AWAY... LEAVE THIS PLACE! BUT I CAN'T! I HAVE NO MONEY... CLOTHES! (SOB) AND WHERE COULD I GO? WHAT WOULD I DO? I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO FREE MYSELF FROM HIM!

THE ONLY THING THAT MADE LIFE BEARABLE FOR HER IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED, WERE RICK'S VISITS. SHE WAS IN LOVE WITH HIM...

RICK YOU'VE FINISHED INSPECTING THE FARM. CAN'T YOU STAY A WHILE? MUST YOU GO?

I'M SURPRISED AT YOU, SHIRLEY! WHAT WOULD ALDOUS SAY IF HE HEARD YOU TALK LIKE THAT?

ALDOUS! THAT WAS THE TROUBLE! SHE WAS CERTAIN RICK CARED FOR HER, AND THAT THE ONLY THING THAT KEPT HER FROM SHOWING IT... WAS THE FACT THAT SHE WAS MARRIED!

ALDOUS! HOW I HATE HIM! HE'S RUINED MY LIFE! I WISH HE'D DYE!

AT THAT MOMENT ALDOUS CAME IN FROM THE FIELDS.

"W-TH-R--" NEARLY GOT MYSELF KILLED!" THOSE DAMNED SINK HOLES!

? SINK HOLES? WHAT'S A SINK HOLE?



THEY'RE CAUSED BY UNDERGROUND RIVERS! THE RIVER KEEPS EATIN' AWAY THE SOIL UNTIL THE TOP GROUND JUST GAVES IN!

OH?



I WAS DRIVIN' THE TRACTOR CROSS THE FIELD TO THE HOUSE WHEN THE GROUND JUST OPENED UP NOT TEN FEET IN FRONT OF ME! STOPPED JUST IN TIME!

OH...



DAMNED SINK HOLES! PRACTICALLY SUFFOCATED! IF I'D FALLEN IN THERE, YOU'D NEVER HAVE FOUND ME!

OH?



SHE DRAGGED THE UNCONSCIOUS ALDOUS FROM THE HOUSE... AND WITH GREAT EFFORT, LIFTED HIM ONTO THE TRACTOR. OVERHEAD, THE DARK SKY RIMGELED OMINOUSLY AS IF IN REPROACH...

THE ENTIRE PLAN STRUCK HER WITH SHOCKING FORCE! HERE WAS HER ONE AND ONLY CHANCE FOR FREEDOM... FOR HAPPINESS! AND SHE WAS IN NO MIND TO LET IT SLIP BY...



HAVE TO HURRY! HE... HE'LL MAKE UP SOON! (GASP!)



SILENTLY, SHE THANKED ALDOUS FOR HAVING MADE HER LEARN TO WORK THE TRACTOR! NOW, WHEN HER FUTURE... HER LIFE... DEPENDS ON IT, SHE WAS ABLE TO SEND THE MACHINE LURCHING ACROSS THE FIELDS...



DRUPELETS OF RAIN PLUNGED FROM THE SKY INTO THE EARTH! THE WIND ROSE, WHIPPING HER HAIR! SHE REACHED THE SINK HOLE —

...IT'S BIG! BIG!
PLENTY BIG ENOUGH
FOR THE TRACTOR,
TOO!



SHE RACED BACK TO THE TRACTOR AND PROPPED ALDOUS IN ITS SEAT! FRANTICALLY, SHE HEADED THE TRACTOR TOWARD THE GAPING HOLE, WAITED... AND THEN LEAPED CLEAR!



SPRAWLED ON THE GROUND, SHE WATCHED SPELLBOUND AS THE TRACTOR TEBTERED ON THE EDGE OF THE PIT... AND THEN TOPPLED INTO OBLIVION...



THERE WAS AN INVESTIGATION BUT IT DISCLOSED NOTHING

YOU'LL NEVER FIND A BODY DOWN THERE! PROBABLY CARRIED AWAY BY THAT UNDERGROUND RIVER! NO SIGN OF THE TRACTOR, EITHER!



... AND THEN THERE WAS THE INQUEST...

... BECAUSE THE BODY OF THE DECEASED WAS NOT BEEN FOUND, THE VERDICT IS DEATH BY ACCIDENT, DUE TO THE CAUSES OF NATURE!



... AND THEN SHE WAS FREE! SHE KNEW RICK WOULD SOON COME TO HER, AND SHE STROLLED ABOUT THE FARM WHILE SHE WAITED. IT WAS THE SAME UGLY, EMPTY-FEELING FARM... STILL THE PLACE WHERE, IT SEEMED, NO ONE LIVED!



RICK CAME... AND SHIRLEY RAN HAPPILY TO HIM.

I... I HEARD ABOUT ALDOUS, SHIRLEY! I'M SORRY!

DON'T BE SORRY, RICK, BE GLAD HE WAS HEAR, GRACE! HE STOOD BETWEEN US, BUT NOW WE'RE FREE, RICK!



WE DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID TO SHOW OUR FEELINGS ANYMORE, RICK DARLING! TELL ME! TELL ME ALL THE THINGS YOU'VE BEEN WANTING TO TELL ME!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I CAME TO SAY "GOOD-BYE"!

"GOOD-BYE"!

SURE! JOE FARNSWORTH'S COMING BACK TO TAKE OVER MY JOB! I'M BEING SENT TO ANOTHER STATE!

ANOTHER STATE? YOU'LL TAKE ME WITH YOU, WON'T YOU, RICK? FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, DON'T LEAVE ME HERE! SAY YOU'LL TAKE ME WITH YOU!

ARE YOU KIDDING?

LOOK, SHIRLEY, YOU'RE A NICE GIRL, BUT I CAN'T TAKE YOU WITH ME! I'VE BEEN HAPPILY MARRIED FOR YEARS! I GOT A WIFE AND TWO KIDS!

RICK!

RICK...

SHE NEVER SAW OR HEARD FROM RICK AGAIN! SHE REMAINED LASHED TO THE DESOLATE FARM, WHILE THE WEDS PASSED INTO MONTHS. AND ONE DAY, AS SHE WENT TO DRAW WATER FROM THE WELL...

GHILLY OUT HERE! BETTER PULL THE BUCKET UP AND HURRY INSIDE!

SHE WOUND THE DRAW, DRAWING THE BUCKET UPWARD! ONCE... TWICE... THEN, SUDDENLY IT STOPPED!

DRAW! WON'T COME UP ANY FURTHER! SOMETHING'S HOLDING IT BACK!

SHE PITTED ALL HER STRENGTH TO THE TASK OF RAISING THE BUCKET, BUT IT WAS NO USE! THE HANDLE WAS WRENCHED FROM HER GRIP!

THE BUCKET'S GOING DOWN! SOMETHING'S PULLING IT BACK DOWN!



THE ROPE UNCOILED TO ITS FULL LENGTH, AND THEN IT SNAPPED TAUT! IT SWAYED AND JERKED.



IT'S...IT'S AS IF SOMETHING IS GLUING UP!

ROOTED TO THE SPOT, SHE STARED IN HORROR AS FIRST ONE HAND SLID OVER THE WELL'S WALL...AND THEN ANOTHER...



SHE WAS PETRIFIED! THE INCREDULOUSLY HORRIBLE THING GRASPED HER ARM WITH A SLIMY, SUCTORIAL... (The word 'SUCTORIAL' is crossed out and replaced with 'SUCKING')... AND SHE FOUGHT HYSTERICALLY... BUT THE SLOPPING, MAGGOT-COVERED LIMBS LOOKED HER IN A DEATH GRIP... AND DRAGGED HER INTO THE DEPTHS!



THE HOLLOW ECHOES OF HER SCREAMS CEASED ABRUPTLY, AND A CLOAK OF UTTER SILENCE SEEMED TO SETTLE OVER THE EMPTY FARM! NOW IT TRULY WAS... A PLACE WHERE NO ONE LIVED!



-THE END-

NEW! NEW! NEW! WELL-DONE! WELL-DONE! IF SHIRLEY HADN'T GONE TO THE WELL, SHE MIGHT NOT HAVE *WISHED* THE BUCKET! OF COURSE, YOU REALIZE NOW THAT THE UNDERGROUND RIVER FROM THE SINK HOLE WAS THE WATER THAT FED THE WELL! HEH! I'LL BET ALDOUS EXPERIENCED A *JOWAN* FEELING WHEN HE WENT TO HIS DEATH! OH, WELL... AS THE SAYING GOES, "HOW YA GONNA KEEP 'EM DOWN ON THE FARM AFTER THEY'VE SEEN DEAD ALDOUS?" NEW! NEW! NEW!



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

W-H-M-P-A! IS THAT *SHOULD A FAIRY TALE THE HOLEY-KEEPER* JUST TOLD YOU SUPPOSED TO BE A *HORROR* STORY? *W-H-M-P-A!* I'LL BET YOU DIDN'T BAT AN EYELASH! NOW, IT'S *MY TURN!* YES, IT'S *ME MAN!* THE *CRYPT-KEEPER!* I'VE LOOKED THROUGH MY COLLECTION OF TERROR-TALES HERE IN MY CRYPT, AND I'VE COME UP WITH A *HUM-DINGER!* THIS TAAR WILL ABSOLUTELY SEND CHILLS AND SHIVERS FROM THE TIPS OF YOUR CROOKED TOES TO THE ENDS OF THE HAIRS OF YOUR *UNCOMFY HEAD!* IF THE BLOOD DOESN'T FREEZE IN YOUR VEINS FROM *FAAR* SHIVER-TINGLES, THEN YOU'RE BITTING ON *RED-HOT BRISTONES!* I CALL THIS *GRANLY NARRATIVE!*...

LEND ME A HAND!



IT BEGAN IN THE CLEAR, WHITE OPERATING ROOM OF THE COUNTY HOSPITAL! DOCTOR HAROLD JOHNSTONE, HIS BROW WET WITH PERSPIRATION, STEPPED BACK FROM THE SHEETED PROSTRATE FORM ON THE OPERATING TABLE AND REMOVED HIS MASK! HIS WHITE-COATED ASSISTANT GRASPED HIS RUBBER-BLOVED HAND...



CONGRATULATIONS, DR. JOHNSTONE! THE MOST AMAZING SURGICAL OPERATION I'VE EVER WITNESSED!

THANKS FOR YOUR INVALUABLE AID!

DOCTOR JOHNSTONE TURNED, AND WITH HEAVY STEPS, MOVED THROUGH THE SWINGING DOORS OUT OF THE OPERATING ROOM! THE SMALL GROUP OF NURSES AND DOCTORS BEHIND HIM...

... A *WONDER!* HE IS DEFINITELY TWO YEARS THE GREATEST SURGEON ALIVE TODAY!



DOCTOR JOHNSTONE ENTERED ANOTHER WHITE, SPARKLING ROOM! THIS ONE WAS LINED WITH MIRRORS AND LOCKERS! HE REMOVED HIS GLOVES AND WASHED... THEN...

THREE... SO THREE! FOUR HOURS AT THE OPERATING TABLE! I'M EXHAUSTED!



DOWN THE IMPOSING MARBLE STEPS OF THE HOSPITAL TO A CAR PARKED AT THE CURB, DOCTOR JOHNSTONE TRUDGED WEARILY...

... GOT TO GET SOME SLEEP! TOO MUCH FOR ME... RIGHT AFTER NIGHT...



THE HEADLIGHTS OF THE HUNTLEIGH AUTOMOBILE REACHED INTO THE DARKNESS OF THE ROAD BEFORE IT LIKE TWO GHOSTLY FINGERS POINTING INTO STERNITY...



DR. JOHNSTONE SAT BEHIND THE WHEEL! HIS EYELIDS WERE HEAVY WITH LACK OF SLEEP! FOR A MOMENT, THEY BLINKED CLOSED! ONE FLEETING MOMENT... SET LONG ENOUGH FOR THE DOCTOR TO MISS THE TURN IN THE ROAD...



THE STILLNESS OF THE DESERTED ROAD WAS SHATTERED BY THE IMPACT OF TWO TONS OF METAL, GLASS, AND HUMAN FLESH! THEN THE DARKNESS CLOSED IN ON THE WRECKAGE OF A ONCE-SLEEPER AUTOMOBILE! THE DOCTOR LAY UNCONSCIOUS, HIS RIGHT HAND PINNED BENEATH THE SEVEN-HUNDRED POUND RED-HOT ENGINE...



WHEN DOCTOR JOHNSTONE OPENED HIS EYES, HE GAZED AT A FAMILIAR SIGHT. THE SPARKLING WHITE WALLS OF A HOSPITAL ROOM! HE LOOKED ABOUT! HIS HEAD CLEARER...

I REMEMBER, NOW! THE CRASH! I MUST HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL! MY HAND... IT *PAINS!* SO...



"RING FOR THE NURSE IF YOU WANT SOMETHING! HE HAD OFTEN TOLD HIS PATIENTS HE LOOKED FOR THE SWITCH IT LAY ABOVE HIS HEAD! HE'D HAVE TO REACH FOR IT WITH HIS RIGHT HAND... THE HAND THAT PAINED HIM SO...



THE BANDAGES COVERED HIS FOREARM FROM HIS ELBOW DOWN! BUT THE HAND... THE HAND WAS GONE...



THEY QUIETED DOCTOR JOHNSTONE! THEY TOLD HIM THAT HIS HAND HAD BEEN MANGLED AND BURNED! THAT WHEN THEY BROUGHT HIM TO THE HOSPITAL... AMPUTATION WAS THE ONLY RECOURSE! THEY SAWE HIM SENSITIVES... TO MAKE HIM BLIND!



THE GUYS WENT UP, AND THE DOCTOR BECAME DULLER AND MORECAST HE BROOSED... SPOKE TO NO ONE!

IT'S UNDERSTANDABLE! AND HE WAS SUCH A BRILLIANT SURGEON!
HIS CAREER IS FINISHED!



AND THEN THEY LET HIM GO HOME! THERE WAS NOTHING MORE TO BE DONE FOR HIM! THE WOUND WOULD HEAL! BUT THE MIND... ALL THE MIND WAS A DIFFERENT MATTER! NOW, HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF YOU WERE IN DOCTOR JOHNSTONE'S SHOES, ENT?



THEN, ONE DAY ABOUT THREE MONTHS AFTER THE ACCIDENT, DOCTOR JOHNSTONE WAS READING A MEDICAL JOURNAL... SOMETHING ABOUT KEEPING TISSUE ALIVE BY CHEMICAL AND MECHANICAL APPARATUS... WHEN IT CAME TO HIM? AN ANSWER! A WAY OUT!



IT WAS SIMPLE! HE'D GET A HAND SOMEWHERE... SOMEHOW! HE'D KEEP IT ALIVE UNTIL HE COULD SUCCESSFULLY GRAFT IT TO HIS WRIST STUMP!



THE EQUIPMENT WAS ASSEMBLED! PLAINS... AIR PUMPS... SLUGGISH FOR CELL NUTRITION... PLASTIC TUBING TO ACT AS VEINS AND ARTERIES... EVERYTHING WAS READY! EVERYTHING EXCEPT...



AT LAST DOCTOR JOHNSTONE HAD FOUND HIS VICTIM! A DOWN-AND-OUTER! A DRUNK ALCOHOLIC WITH NO FAMILY... NO FRIENDS... NO ONE TO MISS HIM IF HE... **DISAPPEARED!**



CLOSE TO MIDNIGHT, TWO SHADY FIGURES STAGGERED FROM A BAR! THEN, ONE COLLAPSED AND THE OTHER CARRIED HIM TO A WAITING CAR...



FOR MANY NIGHTS, IF ANYONE TOOK THE CARE TO NOTICE, THE DOCTOR WAS SEEN FREQUENTING BARS, BACK ALLEYWAYS FOR... **LOOKING... LOOKING...**



ONCE AT HIS HOME, THE DOCTOR CARRIED THE LIMP FORM OF HIS VICTIM DIRECTLY TO HIS LABORATORY! THE LIGHTS IN THE APPARATUS-CLUTTERED ROOM BURNED FAR INTO THE NIGHT! TOWARDS MORNING...



... THE SOUND OF A SHOE STRIKING THE SOFT EARTH WAS HEARD! IT ECHOED ABOUT THE DOCTOR'S GARDEN... RESOUNDING FROM TREE TO TREE...



SOON THE HOLE WAS DEEP AND DARK! THE DOCTOR PLACED THE BODY OF THE UNFORTUNATE DEBILITATED INTO THE TANNING PIT AND FILLED IT UP WITH THE BLACK EARTH...



THE WORK IN THE GARDEN COMPLETED, THE DOCTOR RETURNED TO HIS LABORATORY! THE MONSTROUS THROBBING OF AN AIR PUMP, THE GURGLING OF PLASMA COURSE THROUGH TUBING, THE STEADY DRIP, DRIP OF SALICIDE, WERE HEARD! DOCTOR JOHNSTONE STARED AT THE HAND LYING ON THE WHITE MARBLE SLAB...



HORROR GLOUTHERED AT THE DOCTOR'S POUNDING HEART! THE HAND LAY ON THE TABLE... THE TUBES ATTACHED TO ITS VEINS AND ARTERIES PULSATING WITH EACH STROKE OF THE PUMP... [I've GOT TO TEST IT! TO SEE IF IT'S STILL ALIVE!]



DOCTOR JOHNSTONE TOUCHED A WIRE TO A NERVE ENDING AT THE STUMP OF THE WRIST! A SMALL CHARGE OF ELECTRICITY SHOT FROM IT! THE HAND QUIVERED... A FINGER BEAT UPWARD... [IT IS! IT IS! THANK HEAVENS!]



THEN HE BEGAN TO UNWRAP THE BANDAGES FROM HIS RIGHT ARM... I ONLY HOPE... I DON'T LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS DURING THE OPERATION!



THE CLOCK ON THE LABORATORY WALL TICKED ON AND ON! AND THEN, THREE HOURS LATER...



THE WEEK WENT BY! DOCTOR JOHNSTONE REMAINED INDOORS... HIS ARM IN A CAST! FINALLY THE FATEFUL DAY CAME WHEN THE CAST WAS REMOVED...



SOMETHING WAS WRONG! SOMETHING HAD BEEN OVERLOOKED! THE HAND WAS ASLEEP... THERE WAS NO FEELING! THE DOCTOR COOK A PAIN AND JABBED IT! THERE WAS NO PAIN... [DEAD! IT'S DEAD!]



THE DOCTOR HURLED HIMSELF UPON THE BED AND FELL INTO AN EXHAUSTED SLEEP! THE DAY DAWNED AND NIGHT CAME ON! THE DEAD HAND LAY AT HIS SIDE, ATTACHED TO HIS ARM... LIFELESS... STILL? THEN... A FINGER MOVED? IT TWITCHED... BENT...



HE LIFTED THE HAND, STARRING AT IT! "HE TRIED TO BEND THE FINGERS!" THERE WAS NO RESPONSE.

"STILL DEAD! THE FLESH IS ALIVE BUT THE HAND ITSELF REMAINS DEAD!"



WHEN THE DOCTOR WOKED UP, HE FOUND HIMSELF TEARING AT THE LOCK TO THE TOOLROOM, TRYING TO OPEN THE DOOR...

WHA... WHAT AM I DOING HERE? GOOD LORD, I MUST HAVE WALKED IN MY SLEEP!



THE NEXT NIGHT, THE DOCTOR WENT TO BED AT HIS USUAL TIME! DURING THE DAY HE HAD BEEN ALMOST TEMPTED TO REMOVE THE LIFELESS HAND FROM HIS ARM... BUT HAD DECIDED TO WAIT TO SEE IF HIS SLEEP WAS TROUBLED! HE DREAMED OF WALKING IN DARKNESS... GRIPPING A STICK! HE WAS AWAKENED SUDDENLY BY...

WHY? WHAT THE...? I MUST HAVE BEEN WALKING IN MY SLEEP AGAIN! I FELL OVER THIS... SOFT SPOT IN THE EARTH! THE SPOT!



... THE SPOT WHERE I BURIED ANIM!



WHAT AM I DOING WITH THIS SHOVEL? AND THE HAND. THE DEAD HAND IS HOLDING IT!



DOCTOR JOHNSTONE TRIED TO WRENCH THE SHOVEL FROM THE DEAD LIMB! BUT IT HELD IT IN A VICE-LIKE GRIP...

HOW... HOW DID IT TAKE HOLD OF THE SHOVEL IN THE FIRST PLACE?



THE AMAZED DOCTOR FINALLY REMOVED THE SHOVEL FROM THE HAND, LOADED IT IN THE TOOLROOM, AND RETURNED TO THE HOUSE! THERE WAS NO SLEEP FOR HIM THE REST OF THAT NIGHT! HE WAS SURE NOW THE OPERATION WAS A SUCCESS AND THAT THE HAND LIVED... MOVED... WAS CONTROLLABLE...



IN MY SLEEP, MY SUBCONSCIOUS CAN CONTROL IT! BUT NOW... I CANNOT MAKE IT MOVE...

THE FOLLOWING EVENING, AFTER AN EXHAUSTING DAY OF TREATING THE HAND WITH CATHERMINE TO RELAX THE MUSCLES, THE DOCTOR RETIRED EARLY! HE IMMEDIATELY DROPPED OFF INTO A NIGHTMARE OF CLAWING AT CLOSED DOORS... AND CREEPING... *DIVING!* SUDDENLY, HE OPENED HIS EYES...



GOOD LORD! I AM DIVING!

DOCTOR JOHNSTONE STARED DOWN INTO THE BLACK HOLE BEFORE HIM! THERE, IN THE SLIMY WET SOIL... HE SAW IT...



I... I'VE SORE UP THAT STUMP I MURDERED!

AN EXCruciating PAIN WHIPPED THROUGH JOHNSTONE'S RIGHT ARM! THE HAND... THE DEAD HAND...



IT... IT'S FEARING ITSELF LOOSE!

AN EAR-SPLITTING SCREE SHATTERED THE STILLNESS OF DOCTOR JOHNSTONE'S GARDEN! THE GULPING, WHISPERING, GAGGING URGINGS OF A MAN BEING SQUEEZED TO DEATH WERE HEARD...



THEY FOUND THE DOCTOR LYING BY THE PIT! HE WAS DEAD! BLOOD TRICKLED FROM HIS RAW WRIST-STUMP AND DOWN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PIT...



... A CONFUSE! AND IT'S RIGHT HAND IS SEVERED... BUT IN PLACE!

DON'T UNDERSTAND IT? THE DOC'S HAND WAS AMPUTATED SEVERAL MONTHS AGO... BUT THIS WOUND IS FRESH! LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEEN CHOSED TO DEATH, TOO! I... I WONDER!

HEH, HEH! AND THAT'S MY TALE FROM THE GRYPT! FOR THIS ISSUE, KIDDIE! LOOKS LIKE THE OLD DRUNK'S BOARD RESISTED BEING SEPARATED FROM ITS #DUPLET!

IT CAME BACK, THOUGH, IN A SHIPPIE FASHION! DOCTOR JOHNSTONE'S FOLKSA, THAT IS? WELL, I HOPE THIS STORY WANDERED YOU A FEW SMILES! NOW, I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO THE FACT-KEEPER FOR ANOTHER BUSH-STORY!



I CALL THIS CHILLING TALE...

THE MASK OF HORROR



IT WAS A SMALL COSTUME SHOP IN A DARK TWISTING STREET AT THE EDGE OF THE THEATRICAL DISTRICT. BEN ANDERS STOOD BEFORE ITS CLUTTERED WINDOW AND GAZED IN AT THE ARRAY OF DEATH-LIKE MASKS THAT STARED BLANKLY BACK AT HIM.



BEN ENTERED THE GLOOMY SHOP. THE MUSTY SMELL OF CLOTHES, LONG-SINCE ROTTED INTO UNRECOGNIZABLE FOLLOWING NEWSPAPERS THAT COVERED FORGOTTEN ORDERS, THE OOR OF DRYING RUBBER AND AGING PAPER-MACHE BURNED HIS NOSTRILS. THE SHOP WAS DARK AND DAMP, LONELY, LIKE A TOMB.



HE CAME FROM BEHIND A PAVED CURTAIN... SMALL... WRINKLES... AN OLD MAN, BENT FROM THE SHRINKING OF A LONG YOUNG BODY! HE SHUFFLED TOWARDS KEN

YES? WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

I... I'D LIKE TO BUY A COSTUME... FOR A MASQUERADE PARTY? SOMETHING... *SWOOSH!*



KEN BENTICULATED TOWARD THE WINDOW WHERE THE MASS NINE GRINNED EAGERLY AT AN EMPTY DARK DESERTED STREET...

PERHAPS, A MASK...?

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE MASK YOU ARE WEARING?



HOW?

EVERYONE WEARS A MASK! IT HIDES THE EVIL... THE GOOD... THE HATE... THE LOVE... THAT LIES BENEATH!

YEAH, SURE! ONLY...

BUT HERE... AH... HERE IS MY SHOP. THINGS ARE DIFFERENT. MY MASKS ARE REAL! THEY REFLECT THE CHARACTER OF THE PERSONS WHO WEAR THEM...

THEY... THEY WHAT?

ONE OF MY MASKS REPRESENTS MORE TRUTH THE PERSON THAT IS BENEATH THE FACE IT COVERS!



YES? I SEE! VERY INTERESTING! NOW, ABOUT THIS MASQUERADE PARTY...

HERE! TAKE THIS BOX! IT HAS A COSTUME AND A MASK INSIDE! A MASK THAT ACTUALLY LOOKS LIKE YOU... THE REAL YOU!



KEN ORDERS LEFT THE SHOP, THE PACKAGE UNDER HIS ARM! HE MOVED DOWN THE DARK TWISTING STREET! A GIRL PASSED HIM... STOPPED BEFORE THE COSTUME SHOP... THEN ENTERED.

CRAZY OLD GUY! OH, WELL! AT LEAST I HAVE A COSTUME FOR THE MASQUERADE TONIGHT AT A PRICE I COULD AFFORD!



ONCE BACK AT HIS ROOM, KEN SHOWERED AND SHAVED! THEN HE CUT THE DRESSING THAT SECURED THE BOX, OPENED IT...!

KEN STEPPED BACK HORRIFIED! THE ROTTING FACE OF A DECOMPOSING CORPSE, ALMOST SKULL-LIKE, LEANED UP AT HIM...

WHAT A REMOULFANE COSTUME! WELL... I MIGHT AS WELL WEAR IT! IT'S TOO LATE TO TAKE IT BACK, NOW!

NOW LET'S SEE WHAT KIND OF A COSTUME THE OLD GUY DAVE WE AWAY... HWA...!

GOOD LORD! THE OLD GUY WISE BUT! THAT TOO-BASH ABOUT REAL GAMP ACTER... HMM-MPH BIG JOKE!



KEN DRESSED IN THE MOLDY ROTTEN CLOTHES OF THE COSTUME AND PUT THE MASK BACK INTO THE BOX! THEN HE LEFT! HE TOOK A TAXI CROSS-TOWN TO HIS FRANCES'S HOUSE...

AGNES! YOU'RE NOT DRESSED!

I'M NOT GOING, KEN! I'VE A TERRIBLE HEADACHE! YOU GO ON ALOHN! (I WOULDN'T WANT TO SPOIL YOUR EVENING!)

NONSENSE! I'LL STAY HERE WITH YOU THIS EVE...

NO!... I'D RATHER BE ALONE, KEN. PLEASE.



KEN LEFT! THE PARTY WOULDN'T BE MUCH FUN WITHOUT AGNES! DEAREST AGNES! SOMEDAY SHE WOULD BE KEN'S WIFE! AND THEY'D SNOW-GLD TOGETHER AND THE MASE...



I LEFT MY MASK AT AGNES' HOUSE! I'LL HAVE TO GO BACK AND GET IT!

KEN TURNED AROUND! A CAR PULLED UP BEFORE AGNES' HOUSE! A MAN GOT OUT AND WENT INSIDE (KIM MOVED TOWARD THE DOOR) OPENED IT

DID YOU OLY JAP OF HIM, HONEY?

YES, THE GAMP I SENT HIM ON WITHOUT ME! TOLD HIM I HAD A HEAD-ACHE! HE WON'T BOTHER US AGAIN TONIGHT! NOW... KISS ME!



KEN POKED UP HIS PACKAGE AND CLOSED THE DOOR!
ARMED... ARMED AND ANOTHER MAN!



HOW, HOW
COULD SHE DO THIS TO
ME? I... I THOUGHT SHE
LOVED ME!

KEN WALKED IN A DAZE! HE KEPT SEEING THEM... TO-
GETHER... KISSING... EMBRACING... AND LAUGHING...
LAUGHING AT HIM...



WE... WE WERE ENGAGED!
... I FEEL LIKE A FOOL!

AND THEN HE FOUND HIMSELF STANDING BEFORE A
DOOR! FROM WITHIN, THE SOUND OF MUSIC AND REV-
VERBY DRIFTED ONTO THE DARK STREET! HE UNLATCHED
THE BOX AND SLIPPED ON THE MARBLE! THE DOOR
OPENED.



GOOD LORD!
OH, YOU GAVE ME A SCARY!
WHAT A... A SCARY MAN!

KEN MOVED AS THOUGH IN A DREAM! PEOPLE IN VARIOUS
COSTUMES, LAUGHING, TALKING, DANCING, DRINKING,
ALL SEEM SILENT AS THEY CAUGHT SIGHT OF HIM!
BUT HE DIDN'T CARE! HE FELT LIKE HIS MARIL DEAD
... HIS LIFE ENDED! THE OLD MAN... FURRY... THE
OLD MAN WAS ALMOST RIGHT.



SHAY! O' MERE WINTER COPPER! I
BET JARRE THE GIRL FOR YOU!
O' MOK, O' MOK, HOC.

BUT, I

THE DRUNKER PIRATE PULLED
HIM TO A FAR CORNER OF THE ROOM
WHERE A SHAPELY GIRL... HER HAIR
COVERED BY THE MARK OF AN
EVIL VAMPIRE, SAT DISCREETLY.



MINN VAMPIRE! LOOKA WHAT
I GOT FOR YOU!

THE GIRL LOOKED UP! THE DRUNKEN
PIRATE HUNGLED ON.

WINTER COPPER! BEST MINN
VAMPIRE! I'M SURE YOU TWO
WILL BE SOO HAPPY TOGETHER.



HE STAGGERED AWAY! THERE WAS
A MOMENT OF EMBARRASSING
SILENCE AND THEN...

IF YOU CAN STAND IT
SHALL WE DANCE?

YES! IT'S
LOVE TO!



HE TOOK HER IN HIS ARMS? HER WARM LOVELINESS WAS COMFORTING TO HIM? TONIGHT... TONIGHT HE WOULD HAVE *FORGOT*? FORGOT *AGES*? OVER... *DOZE* WITH...

SO DID I...

I... I'M SORRY ABOUT THE MARRIAGE!
I... I SOUGHT IT MIGHT UNNEED!



THE GIRL? THE GIRL IN THAT DARK TWISTING STREET THAT WENT INTO THE SHOP... AFTER HE CAME OUT...

AT A LITTLE PLACE DOWNTOWN... A COSTUME SHOP WITH A SUPER OLD PROPRIETOR?

YES? IS THAT WHERE YOU BOUGHT YOURS?



THE MUSIC... THE LAUGHING AND THE GIRL IN HIS ARMS... WARM... LOVELY... TALKING TO HIM? MAKING HIM FORGET... FORGIVE!

I WAS ANGRY AT HIM, UNTIL NOW!

I... I DON'T HATE IT!

DID HE TELL YOU ABOUT HIS MARRIAGE? FOOT THAT THEY TRULY REPRESENTED THE WEAKER?

YEAH! CRAZY OLD COOT? IT WAS A DIRTY TRICK!



WELL IF IT WENT FOR THESE MARRIAGES... THESE HORRID MARRIAGES HE GAVE EACH OF US, WE NEVER WOULD HAVE MET!

THAT THAT'S RIGHT!



THEY LAUGHED? SHE WAS SWEET? NOT HARD AND COLD LIKE AGES? SHE WAS SOFT... GENTLE...

I'LL BET UNDER THAT EVIL VAMPIRE MASK, THERE'S A FACE AS LOVELY AND AS GRABBING AS THE VOICE I HEAR AND THE BODY I SEE...

THE SAME TO YOU... MISTER... COME!



THE EVENING WENT GRAND FOR HIM AND HIS MYSTERIOUS MARRIED PARTNER DANCED ON... AND LAUGHED AND TALKED... AND FELL IN LOVE...

PLEASE, DARLING? LET'S GO OUT INTO THE BARRON? IT'S ALMOST MIDNIGHT AND I... IT'S LIKE TO BE ALONE WITH YOU WHEN WE DANCE?

OF COURSE, SWEET? WE'LL FIND A QUIET, LOVELY SPOT!



NEAR A MIRROR-LIKE LILY POOL, THEY STOOD... KEN AND THIS LOVELY CREATURE WHOM HE HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH...

"... I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE, DEAREST! I'LL MARRY YOU NO MATTER WHAT!"

"AND I, FOR, DARLING! IF WE'VE FALLEN IN LOVE IN SPITE OF THESE HORRID MARKS... IT CAN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE!"



WITH TREMBLING HANDS, KEN GRABBED THE EYELID, PULLED, YANKED, BARE FROM THE GIRL AND LIFTED IT AWAY...

"DURRY GOOD LORD!"

"YES... I'LL MARRY YOU AND THIS IS AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY..."



SHE SPANG AT HIM... BURYING HER SHARP FANGS IN HIS NECK! FOR A MOMENT, KEN WAS PARALYZED WITH FEAR! THEN...

"GET AWAY... FROM... ME... GASP... GASP... GASP... HORRIBLE... FIGHT!"



THEY STRUGGLED! KEN'S FOOT SLIPPED FROM UNDER HIM, AND HE DROPPED TO THE GROUND! SHE WAS UPON HIM... CLAWING... SCRATCHING... TEARING! THE POOL... THE LILY POOL...

"MY BELT CHANCE..."



HE PUSHED HER HEAD BELOW THE SURFACE! SHE CLUTCHED AT HIS HAIR, TEARING IT FROM HIS FACE! THE WATER WAS CHURNED BY THE GASPING AND STRUGGLING OF THE DROWNING GIRL...

"DE... DEAR... MONSTER... LORD!"



AND THEN THE SPLASHING AND THE CHURNING CEASED! THE VAMPIRE WAS DEAD! THE RIPPLES RAN IN CONCENTRIC CIRCLES TO THE EDGE OF THE LILY POND! KEN SAID DOWN AT ITS SHIMMERING WATER... AT THE GIRL LING BELOW ITS MIRROR-LIKE SURFACE! AND THEN HE SAW IT!

"OH LORD NO... NO!"



"HIS OWN REFLECTION! HIS FACE... DEFORMED..."



"WELL, THAT'S MY TALK, STICKER! KEN LOOKED INTO THE LILY POOL AND DECIDED FIGHT THEN AND THERE TO WIN A GOOD PLASTIC SURGEON! OH WELL! HE'LL FIND OUT THAT IT'S AN UNDERCATER HE NEEDS! AND NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO MY FELLOW GHOULMATE, THE OLD WITCH! BYE, NOW!"



"AND, IF YOU DON'T HAVE A SUBSCRIPTION YOU'LL FIND OUR ADDRESS SOMEWHERE!"

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEL, HEL! YEAH! IT'S ME AGAIN! THE OLD WITCH! I SEE IT IS TIME
 ONCE MORE FOR ME TO LIGHT THE FIRE UNDER MY CAULDRON AND SEND
 FOR YOU ANOTHER TALE OF TERROR! I'M SURE YOU'LL LIKE THE
 TASTE OF THIS YARN I'VE COMBINED! IT'S A SPECIAL RECIPE FILLED
 WITH HORROR, WELL GARNISHED WITH FRIGHT AND TOPPED OFF WITH
 A SHOCKING FINISH! TUCK YOUR SHOULDER UP UNDER YOUR LITTLE
 CHINS SO THE DRIPPING CHILLS WON'T SOIL YOUR MURRY WRAPPED,
 AND I'LL FEED YOU THE TALE I CALL...

DYING TO LOSE WEIGHT!



MY TALE BEGINS IN A SMALL TOWN! IT'S A NICE
 TOWN...WITH NICE PEOPLE! TALL NICE PEOPLE...
 SHORT NICE PEOPLE... SKINNY NICE PEOPLE...
 AND FAT NICE PEOPLE! AH, THE FAT NICE PEOPLE!
 THEY ARE THE ONES MY STORY IS ABOUT! THERE'S
 MRS. VAN KLEDGE, THE TOWN'S RICHEST WOMAN...

MY DEAR MRS. VAN KLEDGE! YOU
 SIMPLY MUST REDUCE! YOUR
 FIGURE IS GETTING MORE
 IMPOSSIBLE TO FIT
 EVERY DAY!

REALLY, MERRY? WHY...
 I DO LOVE MY
 BOO-BOOS,
 SO MUCH!



AND THEN THERE'S TOM ARDIN, A FEN-POCKET HUSBAND IF YOU EVER SAW ONE...

LOOK AT YOU! I'M ALWAYS MISSING BUTTONS ON YOUR CLOTHES! THEY KEEP POPPING OFF! I'M ASHAMED TO BE SEEN WITH YOU ON THE STREETS! WHY DON'T YOU GO ON A DIET?

WELL, MA? YOU KNOW I LIKE MY EATIN' MORE'N ANYTHING IN THE WORLD!



...AND LALLY BATES... EIGHTEEN AND NEVER BEEN MARRIED... OF COURSE...

ANOTHER SATURDAY NIGHT AT HOME? LALLY, HOW DO YOU EXPECT BOYS TO ASK YOU OUT IF YOU REFUSE TO WATCH YOUR FIGURE?

BUT MOTHER! I... I COULDN'T GIVE UP MY ICE-CREAM FRAPPÉ SANDWICH WITH SHIPPED CREAM! I LOVE THEM SO!



...AND POOR CHARLIE STREET... TWO-HUNDRED AND FORTY POUNDS OF BACHELOR... LIVING IN A FURNISHED ROOM...

NEVER GOES OUT WITH ALL THE NICE WOMEN BOARDIN' WITH ME! THEY WON'T LOOK AT HIM 'CAUSE HE'S SO... SO YOU KNOW!



OH, OF COURSE THERE ARE OTHER NICE FAT PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN, BUT THESE FOUR ARE THE ONES WE ARE MOST CONCERNED ABOUT! THESE FOUR AND ONE OTHER! A HEAVY MAN WITH TWINKLING EYES WHO JUST AT THIS MOMENT IS DRIVING HIS EXPENSIVE CAR DOWN THE MAIN STREET.

H-M-M-M! THIS LOOKS LIKE A GOOD SPOT TO SET UP MY "CLING"!



THE HEAVY MAN WITH THE TWINKLING EYES AND THE EXPENSIVE CAR PULLS UP BEFORE A LARGE BUILDING WITH A SIGN HANGING FROM IT... AN ADVERT

WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR! TOPFIDE BRASS FORRENT!



A FEW DAYS LATER, LARGE POSTERS BEGIN TO APPEAR ON PAPER, BILL BOARDS, AND BRICK WALLS AROUND TOWN...

ARE YOU OVERWEIGHT? ARE YOU THIN, LITTLE, LONELY, UNPOPULAR? BE AROUND YOU ARE...

RE... ?

DR PERDO'S AMAZING FORMULA WILL WORK WONDERS FOR YOU! NO DIETING! NO EXERCISING!

EAT ALL YOU PLEASE! LOSE WEIGHT IMMEDIATELY! ATTEND LECTURE TONIGHT!



CAN IT BE TRUED? NO DEFINING NO EXPERIENCES! JUST ON PERDO'S AMAZING FORMULA! ALL THE NICE FAT PEOPLE OF THE TOWN JAM THE LECTURE HALL TO HEAR DR PERDO...

...AND SO, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THAT IS THE STORY OF MY DISCOVERY! IN THIS BREV CAPSULE IS THE WHOLE SECRET OF MY AMAZING REDUCING PROGRAM! LET ME WARR YOU! THE COSTS OF MY RESEARCH WERE HIGH. THEREFORE, MY FEE FOR THIS PRECIOUS CAPSULE WILL BE HIGH!



MRS. VANLEDGE IS FIRST IN LINE THE NEXT MORNING WHEN DR. PEROD OPENS THE DOOR TO HIS 'CLINIC'. BEHIND HER ARE TOM AINSWORTH, BATES, AND CHARLIE STREET...



COME IN! COME IN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!

YES, THE FEE IS ONLY TWO HUNDRED DOLLAR FOR ONE LITTLE CAPSULE! BUT IF IT IS ALL THAT DOCTOR PEROD CLAIMS IT TO BE, IT'LL BE WORTH IT!



AND IN TWO WEEKS, IF YOU HAVE ALL NOT BEGUN TO LOSE POUNDS AND POUNDS, I GUARANTEE A FULL REFUND TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU!

ONLY OLD DOC DOWNERTS, THE TOWN DOCTOR, IS DUBIOUS OF THE STRANGER'S WONDERFUL CAPSULE.



IT IS IMPOSSIBLE THAT THIS CAPSULE WILL DO ALL DR. PEROD CLAIMS IT WILL, MR. AINSWORTH. IF YOU WANT TO REDUCE, I CAN PRESCRIBE A DIET WHICH...

BUT DOC DOWNERTS IS WROTHEN! THE FOUR NICE FAT PEOPLE EACH TAKE ONE OF DOCTOR PEROD'S CAPSULES...



HERE GOES, MOTHER!

THAT'S A GOOD-GIRL, SALLY!

IN A FEW WEEKS, THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE PAID DR. PEROD HIS FABULOUS FEE BEGIN TO LOSE WEIGHT...



JUST LOOK AT MR. STREET! HE LOOKS TWENTY POUNDS SLIMMER ALREADY!

AND IN A MONTH, THE NICE FAT PEOPLE WHO HAVE TAKEN DR. PEROD'S CAPSULES ARE NICE SLIM PEOPLE...



CAN I TAKE YOU TO THE SOPHOMORE DANCE SATURDAY NIGHT, SALLY?

IT'S *LOVE* TO GO, IRVING!

SO THAT WHEN DOCTOR PEROD CLOSSES HIS 'CLINIC', AND WISE GOOD-BYE TO THE NICE SMALL TOWN, THERE ARE FOUR GRATEFUL THIN PEOPLE TO SEE HIM OFF...



GOOD-BYE, DOCTOR PEROD!

THANKS FOR EVERYTHING, DOC!

GOOD-BYE! DOCTOR! I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU FOR THIS!

BUT A FEW WEEKS AFTER DR. PERDIS HAS GONE, THE NICER THAN PEOPLE WHO TOOK HIS AMAZING CAPSULE HAVE BECOME THINNER! PEOPLE...

SAULE! YOU MUST EAT MORE! YOU'RE GETTING BRIGHT AS A RAIL!

I EAT ALL I CAN, MOTHER! I... I'M **STARVING**!



... AND STILL THINNER...

REALLY, MRS. VAN ELDRE! THIS IS GETTING RIDICULOUS! I'VE TAKEN IN THIS DRESS THREE TIMES ALREADY!

I... CAN'T HELP IT, PEARL! I CAN'T SEEM TO STOP!



UNTIL...

WHY DON'T YOU GO SEE OLD DOC DOUBERTY, TOM? HE'LL TELL YOU WHY YOU'RE DOWN TO NINETY POUNDS!

I CAN'T, LEENA! HE WARNED ME! I'D BE... EMBARRASSED!



THEN, ONE DAY...

COME ON, DOC! DO YOU? IT'S MY ROOMER, CHARLIE STREET. HE'S DYING!



BUT WHEN OLD DOC DOUBERTY ARRIVES...

YOU'RE TOO LATE, DOCTOR! HE... HE'S DEAD!

GOOD HEAVENS! HE'S ALL SMASHED! THEN AS A BONE! HE LOOKS LIKE HE STARVED TO DEATH!



HE AIN'T GOT NO FAMILY, DOCTOR!

I'LL CALL THE CITY MORGUE! I HAVE TO PERFORM AN AUTOPSY TO DETERMINE THE CAUSE OF DEATH!



AT THE MORGUE, DOC DOUBERTY TAKES A SCALPEL AND...

GOOD LORD!



STRAIGHT TO MRS VAN KLEGE'S PALATIAL HOME, THE OLD DOG HURRIES! THERE ISN'T A MOMENT TO LOSE!

MRS VAN KLEGE! I MUST SEE HER!

MRS VAN KLEGE IS DEAD!



THE DOCTOR ARRIVES AT SALLY BATES' HOUSE JUST AS SALLY PASSES INTO THE BEYOND! TOM AIXIN IS DEADLY ILL. WHEN DOC DOUGHERTY ARRIVES, HE ADMINISTERS CROSS, BUT...

I'M TOO LATE! I CAN'T SAVE HIM, NOW!

SOB... SOB... MY POOR TOM! HE... SOB... JUST WASTED \$\$\$!



THEN THE DOG HURRIES THROUGH FARLAND'S HOUSE.

WHAT'S WRONG, DOC? YOU'RE HERE AS A GHOST!

YOU'VE GOT TO SWEAR OUT A WARRANT FOR THIS INHUMAN DOCTOR PEROD! HE'S MURDERED FOUR PEOPLE!



THE WARRANT IS SWORN AND THE SEARCH FOR PEROD BEGINS.

I THINK IT WOULD BE WISE IF THE INFORMATION AS TO THE CAUSES OF DEATH BE WITHHELD FROM THE FAMILIES OF THE VICTIMS!

YES! THAT WOULD BE A SOUND POLICY UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES!



WEEKS GO BY, BUT THE TREACHEROUS DOCTOR IS NOT FOUND.

I SIGNED THE OATH CERTIFICATE WITHOUT AUTOPEY ON MRS VAN KLEGE SINCE I KNEW WHAT I WOULD FIND, ANYWAY!

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, DOC!



THE WEEKS STRETCH INTO MONTHS, BUT DOCTOR PEROD ELUDES HIS PURSUERS! THEN, ONE DAY ABOUT SIX MONTHS AFTER HIS FOUR VICTIMS HAD DIED, DOCTOR PEROD, SPORTING A MOUSTACHE AS A DISGUISE, IS DRIVING ALONG A COUNTRY ROAD.

HMMM! I'D BETTER TAKE A DETOUR... I MIGHT BE RECOGNIZED!



THEY SAY A CRIMINAL ALWAYS RETURNS TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME! PEROD SEEMS TO BE NO EXCEPTION! HE TAKES A BACK ROUTE, SORTING THE EDGE OF TOWN.

WELL! THE TOWN CEMETERY! LET'S SEE! I SOLD FOUR CAPSULES IN THIS BORG! THAT MEANS I GOT FOUR CUSTOMERS. SURIED BEING THAT 'IRON CAT'!



SUDDENLY THE ENGINE SPUTTERS! DOCTOR PERDO LOOKS DOWN! THE GAUGE REGISTER IS EMPTY! HIS CAR JUST HAS ENOUGH POWER TO COAST INTO A NEARBY GAS STATION...

I'LL KEEP MY FAGE HED- DEN! THIS HICK WON'T RECOGNIZE ME!

YES, BIRT GAS?

YEP! FAL IT UP? RIGHT?

SUDDENLY THE GAS-STATION ATTENDANT TURNS! THAT VOICE HAS A FAMILIAR RING! HE PEEKS INTO THE CAR... FLASHLIGHT IN HAND... SWIRLING FULL INTO THE HARDENING DOCTOR'S FACE...

PERDO? IT'S YOU?

NO! NO!



PERDO LEAPS FROM THE CAR! HE BUCKED DOWN THE ROAD! THE GAS-STATION ATTENDANT SPRINGS TO A FROG...

YEAH! IT'S HIM! ALL RIGHT! I'D KNOW HIM ANYWHERE! GALL OUT A POGGIE! HE'S HEADED SOUTH ON THE POST ROAD! FOR MY DAUGHTER, SALLY... AND THE REST... GET HIM!



MEANWHILE, PERDO IS RACING BLINDLY DOWN THE ROAD! PAST AN IRON FENCE, HE PANTS...



"THE GEMETER?" I COULD HIDE THERE! THEY'D... THEY'D NEVER THINK OF... LOOKING FOR ME... IS THERE?

THROUGH AN OPENING IN THE RUSTED BARS... UP AMONG GREY TONGUESTONES AND GRABBY MOUNDPOOL... HE NURS...



INTO A MASSOLEIN... I CAN HIDE IN HERE



PERDO... IN HIS TERROR... NEVER NOTICES THE NAME OVER THE DOOR... 'VAN KLEGE'!

THE DOOR CLERS BEHIND HIM! HE STANDS BESIDE A COFFIN REPOSING BROTERGELY IN THE CENTER OF THE COLD STONE ROOM! SUDDENLY, HE HEARS A NOISE...

A RUSTLING SOUND! COMING FROM THE CASNET!



PERDO GRABBED THE CATCH THAT HAS HELD THE CASNET CLOSED FOR 36 MONTHS! HE LIFTS THE LID...

OH, MY... GOD... NO...



OUTSIDE THE MARBLELAND, THE POLICE... WITH BLOODHOUNDS HOT ON PERDO'S SCENT... ARE STUMBLING BY A BLOOD-SPENDING, EAR-SPITTING SHREEK...

E-E-E-E-Y-A-A-A-H!

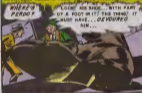


THEY RUSH TO THE STONE VAULT... BRING OPEN THE DOOR...

"KILL IT... BOWIE!" "GOOD LORD!" "WHAT IS HEAVEN IS IT?"



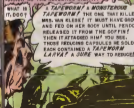
A HUGE WORM-LIKE MONSTER THRASHES ABOUT IN THE DARK MARBLELAND! THEN THE THRASHING IS STILL, AS COUNTLESS BOLLETS FLOW IN! IT'S HOOKER, BARK...



WARRIOR PERDO!

"LOOK! HIS SHOES... WITH PART OF A FOOT IN IT! THE THING! IT MUST HAVE... DEVOURED HIM..."

THROUGH THE MILLING POLICE, OLD DOC COUGHERTY AND JUDGE FARLAND PUSH THEIR WAY! THEY TAKE IN HORROR AS THE REVOLTING SIGHT...



WHAT IS IT, DOC?

A TAPEWORM! A MONSTEROUS TAPEWORM! THE ONE THAT KILLED MRS. VAN GLESS! IT MUST HAVE GROWN AND FED ON HER BODY UNTIL PERDO RELEASED IT FROM THE COFFIN! THEN IT ATTACKED HIM! YOU SEE, THOSE PINKISH CAPSULES HE SOLD EACH CONTAINED A TAPEWORM LARVA! A SURE WAY TO RESUCE!

HEE, HEE! AND THAT'S MY STORY FROM THE SAILORBOON FOR THIS TIME, YOU HONNORABLE MANNY ADDY'S! PERDO GAVE HIS VICTIMS A TAPEWORM TO SWALLOW AND FINALLY ONE SWALLOWED HIM! I HOPE YOU ENJOYED THIS BEEFY TALE! DON'T FEEL SORRY FOR THE FOUR NICE PEOPLE WHO DIED FROM PERDO'S PINKISH PLOT! IN THE END, THE WORM TURNED ON HIM! HEE, HEE! OH, BY THE WAY! IF YOU WANT TO LOOK WEIRDO, DON'T GO TO A QUACK LIKE PERDO! JUST KEEP READING E.C. HONNOR MAAS! YOU'LL SWEEP THE KAT OFF! BYE, NOW!



HORROR



THE VAULT OF



HORROR

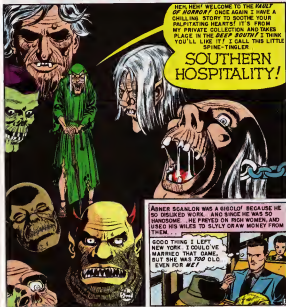
FEATURES



THE PHONE... MY ONLY WAY
TO GET HELP... BUT I DON'T
KNOW WHO TO CALL... I
DON'T KNOW WHO TO CALL...
I DON'T KNOW WHO TO CALL...



THE VAULT OF HORROR!



HEH, HEH! WELCOME TO THE VAULT OF HORROR! ONCE AGAIN I HAVE A CHILLING STORY TO SOOTHE YOUR PALPITATING HEARTS! IT'S FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION AND TAKES PLACE IN THE DEEP SOUTH! I THINK YOU'LL LIKE IT! I CALL THIS LITTLE SPINE-TINGLER:

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY!

ASHER SCANLON WAS A BIGOLD' BECAUSE HE SO DESIRED WORK, AND SINCE HE WAS SO HANDSOME... HE PREYED ON RICH WOMEN, AND USED HIS WILES TO SLYLY ORAW MONEY FROM THEM...

GOOD THING I LEFT NEW YORK. I COULD'VE MARRIED THAT GAI. BUT SHE WAS TOO OLD. EVEN FOR ME!

POISING AS A WEALTHY NEW YORK PUBLISHER, HE TRAVELED TO GEORGIA... AND THERE, BECAUSE HIS PURSE WERE LOW, HE MARRIED A YOUNG GIRL FROM ONE OF THE SOUTH'S RICHEST CLANS.



HIGH! ADNER DIDN'T PUT HIMSELF ON THE BACK FOR LONG. HIS WIFE WAS BEAUTIFUL... BUT NEITHER SHE NOR HER FAMILY HAD A *DIME!*



HEH, HEH! THAT WAS A SAD DAY FOR ABNER, BUT THINGS SOON QUIETED DOWN. CLAUDIA'S FATHER AND AUNT NEVER SO MUCH AS BREATHE ANOTHER SOUTHERN-FRIED WORD ABOUT THE INCIDENT. INSTEAD, THEIR LIVES SEEMED TO BE CONCERNED MOSTLY WITH THE GRAND AND GLORIOUS PAST OF THEIR ANCESTORS.



HE WAS SUCH A GREAT MAN, WASN'T HE, MARTHA?



WHY... SEBASTIAN GORNELIUS JACKSON! CLAUDIA'S GREAT-GRANDFATHER! HE WAS ONE OF THE GREATEST HEROES OF THE CIVIL WAR!



OLD FORK FACE? WHY, SURE, YOUR EYES ARE GLAZIN' UPON ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS MEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY! A BORN SOLDIER AND COURAGEOUS MAN HE'VE LIVED! WHY, HE SAVED THIS VERY PLANTATION WE LIVE ON!



IT WAS HE WHO SAVED THIS FINE HOUSE FROM THE RANGERS OF THE CONFED ARMY, AND WE ARE ETERNALLY GRATEFUL FOR THE BENEFITS WE DERIVED FROM HIS COURAGE... HIS STRENGTH AND WISDOM! HE HAS BEEN A MODEL TO US... ALWAYS READY TO DEFEND THE HONOR AND RESPECTABILITY OF OUR NAME!



A GENTLEMAN, SURE! AND ONE OF THE MOST BRILLIANT GENERALS IN THE WAR! HE BEGAN A FINE TRADITION AND HE UPHELD THE DIGNITY AND HONOR OF THAT TRADITION TILL THE DAY HE DIED! MAY HE REST IN PEACE!



YEA! AND NOW WE WHO ARE LEFT MUST MAINTAIN THE HONOR AND NOBILITY OF THAT GRAND TRADITION, AND MUST NEVER BEMURK THE JACKSON NAME, EVEN IF IT MEANS DEATH!



ASHER WAS VERY UNSATISFIED WITH HIS LOT. HE HADN'T MARRIED TO HELP DEFEND THE JACKSON HONOR... HE HAD WED FOR MONEY! AND HE SOON FOUND AN EASY WAY OF GETTING IT!



AND THEN IT WAS THE GAY LIFE FOR ASHER SCAMMON...



NIGHTCLUBS, BARS, RESTAURANTS, WINE, WOMEN, SONG... AND HE LOVED EVERY FRIGIOUS MINUTE!



BUT SOON HIS MONEY WAS GONE, AND IT WAS BACK TO THE PLANTATION, AND...



IF GENERAL JACKSON WERE HERE, HE'D REPEAT YOU FOR YOUR GLASPHEMY!
HE'D DEFEND THE JACKSON HONOR! HE'D DRAW HIS SWORD, SUH, AND...



SWAY AW? I'M SICK OF LISTENING TO YOU RANT ABOUT THE DEAD-PIN JERK IN THAT PAINTING!
AMMY? YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING!



OH, YES I DO! HIM WITH HIS TWIRLY MUSTACHE AND FANCY SWORD? AW? I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT I THINK OF AMMY!



OHMYGOD! IT'S TOO MUCH! MY... MY HEART?
AUNT MARTHA!



THE STRAIN HAS BEEN TOO GREAT! I'LL GET HER MEDICINE!
NO, CLAUDIA! THE MEDICINE WON'T HELP HER! NOBODY CAN HELP HER... NOW!



HEH, HEH, HEH! WELL, AUNT MARTHA'S FUNERAL WAS A QUIET AFFAIR. CLAUDIA AND HER FATHER SAID NOTHING ABOUT WHAT HAD CAUSED AUNT MARTHA'S DEATH TO SAFEGUARD THE JACKSON REPUTATION! THEN SOME DAYS LATER...



JOMPIN' JENKSONWAT? THAT'S THE FRAME FROM GRANDFATHER'S PICTURE! THE PAINTING OF HIM IS GONE FROM THE WALL!

SO WHATT? SO WHATT? I SHOVED THE PAINTING UP IN THE ATTIC, AND I'M GOING TO SELL THIS FRAME! SO WHATT?



THIS TIME, SON, YOU HAVE DONE TOO FAR! IF GRANDFATHER WERE HERE, HE'D DEFEND HIS HONOR... AND I, IN HIS STEAD, MUST DO LIKEWISE! SURE I CHALLENGE YOU TO A DUEL!





YOU YOU'VE
KILLED HIM!

SHUT UP! IF YOU TELL
ONE WORD ABOUT WHAT
HAPPENED YOU'LL DIE
TOO! BESIDES, THE
SCANDAL WOULD RUIN
THE FAMILY'S HONOR!



ASNER? WHERE
ARE YOU GOING?

TO THE ATTIC!
THERE'S A LOT OF THINGS
UP THERE THAT I CAN
SELL! WAH WAH! AND NO
ONE CAN STOP ME!



AH! LET'S SEE! OH! THERE'S
THE PAINTING OF OLD "SOUR-
PUSS JACKSON"! HIM AND HIS
RANGY SWORD! FMPTT! BET IT
WAS NEVER OUT OF
ITS SHEATH!



WONDER WHAT I SHOULD
SELL FIRST! THERE'S A LOT
OF ANTIQUES HERE THAT
OUGHT TO BRING A GOOD
PRICE...

SAY...



I THINK I'LL SELL THIS WHOLE
PLANTATION! HEAVY! WHO CAN
STOP ME? OUGHT TO GET
QUITE A WAD FOR THIS
DUMF! HMMM...



SHUP! AFTER I COLLECT
ON THIS PLACE, I'LL GET A
QUICK DIVORCE, AND THEN...
SH! WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

SH...



ALONE IN HER ROOM, CLAUDIA SUDDENLY
STIFFENED AS AN AGONIZING SCREAM PERCED
THE MORBID STILLNESS OF THE HOUSE...

HEAVENS! THAT
SCREAM CAME FROM
THE ATTIC!

ABNER! ABNER, ARE YOU IN HERE?



HERE'S HIS FLASHLIGHT ON THE FLOOR! SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED!



DON'T SEE ANYTHING YET!...

OH? WHAT'S THIS?



HE'S DEAD! HE'S BEEN KILLED WITH A SWORD! WHY, IT LOOKS LIKE GREAT-GRANDFATHER'S SWORD!

??? BUT... BUT GRANDFATHER WAS ARMED WITH HIS SWORD! HOW...?



QUICKLY, SHE FLASHED THE LIGHT AROUND THE ATTIC UNTIL IT CAME TO REST ON THE PAINTING. SHE STEPPED BACK, STUNNED. FOR GENERAL SEBASTIAN CORNELIUS JACKSON SEEMED TO BE SMILING... AND HIS SWORD WAS GONE! THE SCABBARD IN THE PAINTING WAS NOW EMPTY!

HEH, HEH! WELL, HUSH MAH MOUTH! IF THAT'S SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY, I THINK I'D LIVE IN CANADA! POOR ABNER (AND HE WAS POOR, WASN'T HE?) WOULDN'T BELIEVE THAT SOUTHERNERS REALLY DO DEFEND THEIR HONOR, BUT HE FINALLY GOT IT INTO HIS HEAD! THE OLD GENERAL MADE IT A POINT TO TEACH HIM! HEH! HEH! WELL, I HOPE YOU ENJOYED MY TALE!

NOW, IF YOU FEEL LIKE BEING BORED, TURN THE PAGE AND READ A STORY BY THAT POWER-PUFF, THE GHOST-KEEPER!



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HERE'S A DELIGHTFUL TALE THAT I'M SURE WILL MAKE THE HAIRS ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK GRAB! IT'S A CHILLER-DILLER SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO FREEZE THE BLOOD IN YOUR VEINS! FROM MY BEST COLLECTION OF TERROR-TALES THAT I KEEP HERE IN THE *CRYPT*, I... THE *CRYPT-KEEPER*... CHOOSE THE SPINE-TINGLING TALE I CALL...

THE JELLYFISH!



NIGHT COVERS THE SLEEPING CITY! IT BRUSHES THE DARK STREETS AND SOBBING ALLEYS LIKE A VELVET BLANKET! HERE AND THERE A MOTH-HOLE OF TRINKLING LIGHT MARKS THE BLACKNESS! ONE OF THESE LIGHTS SPINES FROM A WINDOW OF THE BUILDING MARKED 'MORTON PHARMACEUTICAL SUPPLY CO.' INSIDE, TWO MEN PEESE EACH OTHER.

NO, GRABLER! I WON'T DO IT! IT'S ORIGINAL!

YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A SPINELESS COWARD, HOWARD! YOU'VE GOT NO BACKBONE!



CALL ME ANYTHING YOU LIKE, CHARLES! I WILL NOT PERMIT SUCH AN **OUTRAGE!**

BUT WE CAN MAKE **THOUSANDS**, HOWARD! WE'LL BE **RICH!**



I DON'T CARE, CHARLES! YOU'RE PLAYING WITH **HUMAN LIFE!** I WILL NOT AGREE TO SUCH A **FIERDISH PLOT!**

LISTEN, YOU **JELLY-FISH!** I'M THE **BUSINESS MANAGER** OF THIS COMPANY! **WHAT I SAY GOES!**



ONLY SO FAR AS **BUSINESS MATTERS** AM I CONCERNED! WHEN IT COMES TO **DRUG PRODUCTION**, I HAVE THE **FINAL WORD!** AND I SAY...**NO!**



LOOK, HOWARD! THIS IS AN ORDER FOR **ONE MILLION** HYPODERMIC INSERTS OF **INSULIN!** WE CAN ONLY MANUFACTURE **FIVE-HUNDRED THOUSAND** OF SUCH UNITS IN THE TIME ALLOWED! NOW! WE JUST **DELETE** EACH CAPSULE **ONE HALF!**... WE CAN **MEET** THIS ORDER!



CHARLES! YOU CAN CALL ME A **SPINDELLED!** **JELLY-FISH!**... YOU CAN CALL ME A **COMARD** WITH NO **SHADE-BORE!** YOU CAN CALL ME ANYTHING YOU LIKE! I WILL **NOT** LET YOU **DESTROY** OUR INSULIN OUTPUT TO MEET THIS ORDER AND **THAT'S FINAL!** NOW, I'M **LATE** FOR MY TRAIN! I'LL BE **GONE** OF TOWN FOR THE **NEXT FEW DAYS!**



HOWARD NORTON, BIOCHEMIST IN CHARGE OF DRUG PRODUCTION FOR THE NORTON PHARMACEUTICAL SUPPLY COMPANY, TURNS FROM HIS BROTHER, CHARLES, AND STORMS OUT OF THE OFFICE! CHARLES, THE BUSINESS MANAGER OF THE CONCERN, SIGNS WEARILY INTO A **CHAIR**...



A **TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLAR ORDER**... THROWN OUT THE WINDOW BECAUSE MY BROTHER IS A **MEANFISTE!**...

WELL, I DON'T LET THAT KIND OF MONEY GO SO EASILY! NOT ME! I'M **NO JELLY-FISH!** HOWARD **NEEN'T** FIND OUT! I'LL DO IT **WITHOUT** HIS CONSENT! I'LL **JUST REMOVE** HIS NAME TO THIS PRODUCTION ORDER AND START SHIPPING **IMMEDIATELY!** WHEN HOWARD RETURNS, THE ORDER WILL HAVE BEEN **FILLED!**



AND SO, WITHOUT HOWARD KNOWING IT, CHARLES BORTON BEGINS THE SHIPMENTS OF DILUTED INSULIN! Y'KNOW WHAT ARSLOW IS, RICHEST PEOPLE SUFFERING FROM DIABETES HAVE TO TAKE IT OR ELSE THEY PASS OUT... MAYBE EVEN DIE!

WHAT IS IT, DOCTOR?

HE'S IN A COMA! ARE YOU SURE HE TOOK HIS INSULIN TODAY, MRS. GREENE?

POSITIVE, DOCTOR! I GAVE IT TO HIM MYSELF!

STRANGE! LET ME SEE HIS INSULIN SUPPLY!



ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, THINGS BEGIN TO HAPPEN...

HE'S JUST COLLAPSED... RIGHT THERE ON THE SIDEWALK!

SOMEONE GET A DOCTOR!

DON'T WORRY! FRIS BOY'S DEAD!



PEOPLE TAKING BORTON INSULIN FOR DIABETES BEGIN TO DROP LIKE FLIES...

I - I'M SORRY, MR. THORNTON! YOUR WIFE IS DEAD! SHE MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN TO TAKE HER INSULIN LATELY!

BUT - SHE DID! SHE TOOK IT EVERY DAY JUST AS YOU PRESCRIBED!



AND THEN IT IS DISCOVERED...

NO! IT CAN'T BE! THE INSULIN HAS BEEN DILUTED! IT'S... IT'S PRACTICALLY WORTHLESS IN THIS CONCENTRATION!



IN A FEW DAYS...

I'M FROM THE GOVERNMENT PURE FOODS AND DRUGS ADMINISTRATION! WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DRUG PRODUCTION OF THIS COMPANY?

WELL, MY BROTHER HOWARD IS SOBERMONT IN CHARGE! I'M JUST THE BUSINESS MANAGER!





WHERE CAN I FIND HIM?

HE'S PROBABLY IN HIS LABORATORY - DOWN THE HALL!



THE GOVERNMENT MAN MOVED DOWN THE HALL TO THE DOOR MARKED 'LABORATORY'? HE OPENS IT AND...

YOU HOWARD NORTON, BIOCHEMIST IN CHARGE OF YOUR PRODUCTION?

YES! THAT'S ME!



NORTON! YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!

WHAT?

CHARLES WATCHES, A BRIGHT SMILE ON HIS FACE, AS THE STUTTERING, STAMMERING HOWARD IS HANDCUFFED.



HOWARD! YOU'RE ACTING LIKE A BABY! AWOYNT YOU GOT A BACKBONE? DON'T BE A SPINELESS COWARD! FACE IT... LIKE A MAN!

WHAT... O'MON, MR. NORTON... WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHAT DID I DO?



IN HIS CELL, ANXIOUS TRIAL.

HOW COULD MY BROTHER DO THIS TO ME? WHAT CAN I TELL THEM?

THE TRIAL IS SWIFT! THE EVIDENCE AGAINST HOWARD IS UNDENIABLE! HE HAD BEEN IN CHARGE! HE HAD SIGNED THE PRODUCTION ORDER! HE MUST BE GUILTY! HOWARD REMAINS SILENT THROUGHOUT THE PROCEEDINGS... NERVOUS...



...AND SO I SAY TO YOU, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY...

CHARLES WAS RIGHT! HE CALLED ME SPINELESS... A JELLY-FISH! WELL, MAYBE I AM! I MUST BE! IF I WOEN'T... I'D FIGHT THIS, THIS FRAME-UP!

BUT HOWARD DOESN'T FIGHT! AND WHEN THE JURY FINDS HIM GUILTY...



I SENTENCE YOU, HOWARD NORTON, TO NOT LESS THAN TEN NOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS IN THE FEDERAL PENITENTIARY AT LEVENWORTH, KANSAS!

TEN YEARS!

YES, THE JUDGE SENTENCED HOWARD NORTON TO FROM TEN TO TWENTY YEARS! THAT'S A LONG TIME! TIME FOR A MAN TO **FLY...** TO **FLY...** TO **GROW BIFFER...**



SO HE SAID I HAD NO BACKBONE, DID HE? WELL... WE'LL SEE! WE'LL SEE!

HEY, NORTON! THE WARDEN WANTS TO SEE YOU!



YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, WARDEN?

YES, NORTON! SIT DOWN!



I'VE BEEN LOOKING OVER YOUR RECORD! YOU'RE A BIG-GUNNET. AND A GOOD ONE AT THAT! WE COULD USE A MAN LIKE YOU IN THE PRISON HOSPITAL LAB! WANT THE JOB?

W... WHY... TELL, SIR!



THEN THE JOB IS **POKERS!** NOW **POKERS!** HOWARD NORTON! DEPEND ON YOUR HONOR! NO DEALING OF DRUGS, EAT!

NO, SIR! YOU CAN DEPEND ON ME, SIR!



AND SO, HOWARD NORTON GOES TO WORK IN THE PRISON HOSPITAL LABORATORY! IN SPARE MOMENTS HE BEGINS TO EXPERIMENT...

HEY, NORTON! WHY AREN'T YOU DOWN IN THE RECREATION HALL? THEY'VE GOT A GOOD MOVIE, TONIGHT!

I'D RATHER STAY HERE, GUARD! I'M... I'M WORKING ON SOMETHING!



YES! TEN YEARS IS A LONG TIME! PLENTY OF TIME FOR A MAN TO FIND WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR.

WELL! THE SHOW IS **JUPITER!** SAY, NORTON! ARE YOU NITZ? WHAT ARE YOU PUTTING THOSE **SPONES!** IN YOUR POCKET FOR?

E... I NEED THEM FOR AN EXPERIMENT! I'M WORKING ON!



ONE DAY, AFTER EIGHT LONG YEARS...

AT LAST! I'VE SUCCEEDED! SO I'VE GOT NO **BACKBONE!** OH, CHARLES! SO I'M JUST A **JELLY-FISH!** EAT WE'LL SEE! WE'LL SEE!

AND SO, AFTER TEN YEARS OF GOOD BEHAVIOR, HOWARD NORTON IS PAROLED...



FREE... AT LAST!

A FEW NIGHTS LATER, AS CHARLES NORTON IS SITTING IN HIS LUXURIOUS HOME...



YES, BOLLERS?

IT'S YOUR BROTHER, SIR! HE'S OUTSIDE! HE WANTS TO SEE YOU!



HOWARD... OUT OF PRISON? SEND HIM AWAY! I DON'T WANT TO SEE HIM! I...

CHARLES! IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME!



W-HOW ARE YOU, HOWARD?

AS WELL AS CAN BE EXPECTED. CHARLES? HOW'S BUSINESS? YOU LOOK DATE PROSPEROUS!



Y-YES! THAT MISLEAD ORDER WAS JUST WHAT WE NEEDED! AFTER THE SCANDAL... I SWITCHED TO PLASTIC! MAKE DATE A LOT OF MONEY!

I WONDER IF YOU COULD FIND A PLACE FOR ME, CHARLES? I'M ASKING YOU TO FORGIVE ME FOR THE TROUBLE I CAUSED YOU!



STILL THE SPINELESS JELLY-FISH, EH, HOWARD? APOLOGIZING WHEN YOU KNOW I FORGAVE YOU? ALL RIGHT! I FORGIVE YOU! YOU CAN START IN THE MORNING!

THANK YOU, CHARLES! THANK YOU!



COME? WE'LL DRINK TO OUR REUNION? NO HARD FEELINGS?

NO HARD FEELINGS, CHARLES!

AS CHARLES POURS THE DRINK, HOWARD TAKES A SMALL WHITE PILL FROM HIS POCKET AND DROPS IT INTO CHARLES' GLASS WHILE HIS HEAD IS TURNED.



CHARLES SWALLOWS THE DRINK SWIFTLY...



THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE, HOWARD!



CHARLES SHUDDERS AND STARES AT THE GLASS...



THE GLASS FALLS TO THE FLOOR AND CRACKERS! CHARLES GRABS THE TABLE FOR SUPPORT! HIS BODY GOES LIMP...



SUDDENLY, THE RIGHT-LEAFER CHARLES' BODY AND HE COLLAPSED TO THE FLOOR... A MASS OF FLESH...



HOWARD GAZES AT THE MOUND OF GOURING FLESH BEFORE HIM! HIS THOUGHTS GO BACK TO THE DAYS WHEN HE WAS A CHILD, AT THE BEACH, WHEN HE WOULD ACCIDENTALLY CRUSH A SLIMY JELLY-FISH UNDER HIS BARE FOOT! HE SHUDDERS... GLENCHES HIS FEET AND...



HEHEH! WELL, THAT'S MY LITTLE OFFERING FOR YOUR CONTEMPLATION, DEAR READER! YES, THERE WERE NO HARD FEELINGS ANYMORE! IN FACT, AFTER HOWARD HAD REMOVED HIS SHOES AND SOCKS, CHARLES FELT QUITE SOFT TO HIM! HOWARD WANTED TO TALK! BESIDES, IT WAS GETTING LATE! HE HAD TO STEP ON IT!





THIS IS THE STORY OF
THE NIGHT THAT KATHY'S
**DADDY LOST
HIS HEAD!!**



KATHY STOOD IN THE BACK YARD NEAR THE WOOD-PILE AND LOOKED AT THE WORLD THROUGH TEAR-FILLED EYES! HE HAD HIT HER AGAIN... HER MEAN OLD STEP-FATHER HAD HIT HER AGAIN...

WHY DOESN'T HE LIKE ME?
WHY? I TRY TO DO EVERY-
THING HE TELLS ME...



INSIDE THE HOUSE, MARTIN BLACKBURN WATCHED HIS EIGHT YEAR OLD STEP-DAUGHTER WITH HATE IN HIS EYES! LOOK AT HER...STANDING THERE, BEHAVING LIKE A BABY!

YOU HATE
HER...DON'T
YOU MARTIN?



MARTIN SPUN AROUND AT THE SOUND OF ETHEL'S VOICE...

WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT OF BED?

I HEARD YOU BEATING KATHY! I COULDN'T STAND IT!



GET BACK UPSTAIRS! YOU KNOW WHAT THE DOCTOR SAID...

YOU DIDN'T ANSWER BY DIRECTION, MARTIN! WHY DO YOU SAFE KATHY?



WELL, IF YOU MUST KNOW... IT'S BECAUSE SHE LOOKS SO MUCH LIKE JOHN, YOUR FIRST HUSBAND!

AND YOU'RE JEALOUS OF JOHN, AREN'T YOU? EVEN THOUGH HE'S DEAD, YOU'RE JEALOUS OF HIM!



WHY SHOULDN'T I BET YOU DON'T FOOL ME, ETHEL! I KNOW YOU STILL LOVE HIM! I KNOW YOU NEVER LOVED ME... THAT YOU ONLY MARRIED ME FOR SECURITY?

BUT WHY... WHY TAKE IT OUT ON KATHY?



OUTSIDE, KATHY DRIED HER EYES WITH A TINY CLENCHED FIST! THE SOARS OF MRS. THALMATURGE'S ROCKER DRIFTED ACROSS THE STILL AFTERNOON AIRFIELD, GROTCHETT MRS. THALMATURGE! KATHY WAS AFRAID OF MRS. THALMATURGE... HER WRINKLED SKIN... HER STRONGY HAIR... HER TOOTHLESS GRIN! THROUGH A CRACK IN THE BOARD FENCE, KATHY PEERED AT THE OLD WOMAN...



DON'T PEER AT ME THROUGH FENCES, CHILD! IF YOU WANT TO GET A GOOD LOOK... COME ON OVER!

HIS STEPPATHER HAD WARNED HER ABOUT MRS. THALMATURGE! HE'D CALLED HER A WITCH! ONCE, HE HAD TOLD HER...

I'LL CALL OVER MRS. THALMATURGE! SHE'S A WITCH! SHE'LL TAKE YOU AWAY! SHE'LL BAKE YOU... IN HER OVEN.

NO, DADDY! NOT PLEASE!



KATHY SHIVERED BEHIND THE BOARD FENCE! SHE MUST BE A WITCH! HOW DID SHE KNOW I WAS WATCHING HER? SHE WONDERED! SUDDENLY SHE HEARD HER STEPPATHER BEHIND HER... HIS HEAVY BREATHING... HIS FAMILIAR GROOM...

I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO GET THE WOOD, NOW... GET IT!

YES, DADDY!



MRS. BLACKSON WAS A VERY SICK WOMAN! KATHY HAD LISTENED BEHIND THE DOOR THE DAY THE DOCTOR HAD WARNED HER MOTHER...

STAY IN BED, MRS. BLACKSON! ANY UNKIND EXCITEMENT... ANXIETY... MIGHT PROVE FATAL!

I... I UNDERSTAND, DOCTOR!



AFTER SHE HAD CARRIED THE HEAVY LOSS INTO THE HOUSE, KATHY RUSHED UPSTAIRS TO HER MOTHER'S ROOM! MOTHER WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO LOVED KATHY! SHE HAD NO OTHER FRIENDS! AND SHE COULD HARDLY EVEN REMEMBER HER REAL DADDY NOW...

MOMMY! MOMMY! WHAT'S HAPPENED?

CALL THE DOCTOR... KATHY! I... I'VE HAD... ANOTHER ATTACK!



KATHY'S EYES FILLED WITH TEARS! THEY RAN DOWN HER CHEEKS... WASHING CROOKED WHITE TRAILS IN THE BLACK BRUSHERS! KATHY FLUNG HERSELF ON HER KNEES AND LAY HER HEAD ON HER MOTHER'S HEAVING CHEST...

OH, MOMMY! MOMMY!

PLEASE, DON'T DIE... DON'T DIE AND LEAVE ME! PLEASE...

KATHY... GASP... PLEASE... RUSH... CALL THE... GASP... DOCTOR... HURRY!



WHEN KATHY CAME BACK TO THE HOUSE WITH THE DOCTOR, HER MOTHER WAS DEAD...

I'M SORRY, MARTIN! THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO!

OF COURSE, DOCTOR!

MOMMY... GONE... GONE... GONE...



AFTER THE FUNERAL, KATHY'S STEPFATHER SEEMED TO TREAT HER EVEN MORE CRUELLY THAN BEFORE! SHE WAS ALL ALONE! HER STEPFATHER WOULD GO OFF TO WORK AND LEAVE HER TO SORT FOR HERSELF! OF COURSE, THERE WERE THINGS TO DO... THE FLOORING, THE WASHING... DUSTING... MOPPING... GANTYING WOOD...

KATHY! WHAT FOR BY THE WOODPILE?

OH YES, MRS. THAUMATURGE...



COME OVER, DEAR! I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU!

SOMETHING... FOR ME?



AT FIRST KATHY WAS AFRAID TO GO, BUT LONELINESS IS EVEN MORE FRIGHTENING FOR AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD!
SO—

CANDY FOR ME?

EAT IT, CHILD! IT'S GOOD! MADE IT MYSELF! SIT DOWN...WE'LL TALK!



KATHY AND MRS. THALMATUNGE BECAME VERY FRIENDLY IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS! KATHY FIGURED OUT HER HEART TO THE OLD WOMAN, AND FELT RELIEVED! SHE WOULD VISIT MRS. THALMATUNGE EVERY DAY...

WHAT ARE YOU MAKING, MRS. THALMATUNGE?

SOMETHING GOOD! SOMETHING SPECIAL! A SURPRISE... FOR YOU!



KATHY WAS HAPPY AGAIN! AT LEAST SHE RECEIVED SOME AFFECTION! NOT LIKE IN THE EVENINGS WHEN HIS STEPFATHER CAME HOME FROM WORK...

YOU DIDN'T WASH THE WINDOWS, DID YOU? YOU DIDN'T DO WHAT I TOLD YOU...

I... I FORGOT. DADDY'S BE WATCHING ME, THALMATUNGE... COOKING...



I TOLD YOU TO STAY AWAY FROM THAT OLD CREW. DIDN'T I? SHE'S A BITCH!

SHE'S NOT! SHE'S MY FRIEND!



WELL, YOU STAY AWAY FROM HER OR I'LL THROW YOU WITHIN AN INCH OF YOUR LIFE.

YES, DADDY...



THE NEXT DAY, WHEN KATHY WENT OUT IN THE BACK YARD FOR THE WOOD...

CHILD! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU! I HAVE YOUR SURPRISE FOR THIS!



DADDY SAYS I MUSTN'T GO NEAR YOU ANYMORE! DADDY SAID HE'LL WHIP ME IF I DO!

OLD MRS. THALMATUNGE TRUST HER WARPLED ARM OVER THE BOARD FENCE...

WELL...HERE'S YOUR SURPRISE, ANYWAY!

A BOLL!



KATHY HAD NEVER HAD A DOLL! SHE HELD IT LOVINGLY IN HER TINY HANDS...

IT'S GAWD! OH, NO! I'D NEVER EAT MYSELF! YOU CAN EAT IT WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE IT!
OH, NO! I'D NEVER EAT IT! ACHER! I'LL LOVE IT, ALWAYS!



KATHY SMILED AS SHE STUDIED THE DOLL... IT WAS IT... GOLS... LOOKS... A LITTLE LIKE... MY FATHER... A LITTLE TEE-BEE...

IT'S GAWD! ER, THANK YOU, KATHY! DELICIOUS! MRS THAMMATHURON CANEY!
THANK YOU!



A SMILE SPREAD ACROSS OLD MRS. THAMMATHURON'S WRINKLED FACE AS SHE WATCHED KATHY DANCE HAPPILY ACROSS THE YARD AND INTO THE HOUSE WITH HER PRIDE...



THAT AFTERNOON, KATHY PLAYED WITH HER DOLL! SHE LOST TRACK OF THE TIME! SUDDENLY, SHE HEARD THE DOOR OPEN DOWNSTAIRS...

DADDY'S HOME! AND I DIDN'T FINISH MY SHOES!



KATHY HID THE DOLL, AND WENT DOWNSTAIR! HER STEPFATHER WAS FURIOUS! HE SCAYED AND BAWNT... WHIPPED HER... AND THEN...

GO TO YOUR ROOM! YOU'LL DO WITHOUT SLEEPER TONIGHT PER FAC!



KATHY WENT TO HER ROOM! THE DRAWING PINS OF SUFFER CLAWED AT HER LITTLE STOMACH! SHE HEARD HER FATHER GO OUT INTO THE WOODS! SHE HEARD THE SINGING OF THE 816 HOUND BAN AS IT SPUN... FASTER... FASTER! IT WAS SAFE! GAWD! WAS CUTTING WOOD! SHE GOT OUT THE CANDY DOLL... CANNIBERED IT LOVINGLY...

JUST ONE LITTLE BITE... JUST A LITTLE ONE! IT WON'T SPOIL YOU!



SUDDENLY THE NIGHT AIR WAS SHATTERED BY AN EAR-SPLITTING SCREAM...



AFTER THE DOCTOR HAD COME AND GONE, KATHY STOLE SILENTLY TO HER STEPFATHER'S ROOM! HE LAY IN HIS BED, MORNING...

I. I'M SORRY YOU GOT OFF YOUR HAND, DADDY!
I. I HOPE IT SIGHT NOW!

NO AWAFF!
NO NWA AND
LEAVE ME ALONE!



SUDDENLY MARTIN BLACKBORN'S EYES FELL UPON THE CANDY DOLL THAT KATHY HELD TERRIBLY IN HER ARMS.

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT DOLL?

MRS. THAUMATURGE MADE IT FOR ME!



THE HAND... THE LEFT HAND OF THE DOLL... THE SAME HAND AS THE ONE HE HAD ACCIDENTLY AMPUTATED... WAS MISSING...

RIPE IT TO ME!
RIPE IT TO ME,
DADDY! IT'S
EPH...

NO, DADDY!
NO! IT'S
CANDY...



MARTIN STUMBLED TOWARD KATHY, GASPING FOR BREATH! SHE BACKED AWAY, HUSSING THE DOLL TO HER CHEST...

SARF... YOU'VE CRUSH-
ING ME! I CAN'T
BREATHE! SARF...
RIPE IT TO ME!

NO! IT'S
MINE! IT'S
NOT EVIL!
IT'S ONLY
CANDY
DOLL!



KATHY HURLED THE DOLL TO HER MOUTH, AND SWIFTLY BIT ITS HEAD OFF! IT WAS TRISTY CARAMEL! SHE GAZED AT HER FATHER, WIDE-EYED WHILE SHE CHOMED.

SEE... IT'S ONLY
CANDY!
DADDY!



KATHY TURNED AND WALKED OUT OF HER STEPFATHER'S ROOM! SHE WENT DE-WHISTERS, ACROSS THE BACK YARD, AND UP MRS. THAUMATURGE'S PORCH STEPS! AS SHE OPENED THE DOOR, SHE GULPED DOWN THE LAST OF THE CARAMEL HEAD.

MRS. THAUMATURGE! COME SEE! THE STRANGEST THING JUST HAPPENED TO DADDY!



MRS. THAUMATURGE SMILED AS SHE GAZED AT THE HEADLESS CANDY DOLL IN KATHY'S HAND.



THE
END.

HEH, HEH! WHAT A DELICIOUS FINISH FOR A STORY, EH, DEAR READER? IT CERTAINLY WAS A MOST PLEASANT SURPRISE... FOR DADDY, THAT IS! OH, BY THE WAY! IF YOU'RE WONDERING...



WHAT HAPPENED TO DADDY AFTER HIS LOVER STEPFATHER DIED, WELL, EARLY! OLD MRS. THAUMATURGE ADOPTED HIM! NOT LONG, SHE'S BEING KATHY FLOORING LESSONS, ENA BROWN! AND NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THAT OTHER BOOK-PLICE, THE GARDEN...

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! SO THAT MORBID TALE THE HALL-KEEPER JUST TOLD YOU WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A HORROR STORY, HUH? **HAHAHA!** I'M SURE YOU WERE ALL **BORED TO DEATH!** NOW IF YOU REALLY WANT A GOOD HORROR TALE... NOT A CHILDREN'S FAIRY TALE... COME IN! COME INTO THE **HABIT OF FEAR!** I AM **THE OLD WITCH!** MY CAULDRON IS FILLED TO THE BRIM WITH AN **EVIL BREW!** ITS CONTENTS ARE **SUB-
BLIME AND STEAMING!** SO HIT DOWN ON THAT **BED OF NAILS** OVER THERE AND I'LL DISH OUT A **POINTED TALE... A TALE I CALL...**

REUNION!



MY STORY BEGINS JUST OUTSIDE A SMALL, MID-WEST-ERN TOWN! IT IS NIGHT! THE MOON HANGS LOW IN THE SKY! ITS REFLECTION SHIMMERS ON THE WATERS OF A FLACID LAKE! UNDER A GnarLED OAK TREE, A WOMAN STANDS SOBBING SILENTLY, GAZING OUT OVER THE STILL WATER.

OH, WHY... WHY... WHY DID IT HAVE TO HAPPEN?

John Lyndall

THAT'S LILLIAN ANSLEY
SPRING HER LITTLE HEART
OUT! POOR WOMAN! WOULD
YOU LIKE TO KNOW WHAT
HAPPENED? IT'S A LONG
SAG STORY! BRACE
YOURSELF!

LILLIAN WAS YOUNG WHEN SHE MARRIED
WALDO ANSLEY! PROBABLY FORTY YEARS!
NINETEEN! WALDO WAS THIRTY-THREE AT
THE TIME! LILLIAN WAS INFATUATED WITH
THIS DISTINGUISHED-LOOKING OLDER
MAN... AND WALDO'S EGO DIDN'T SUFFER AT
HAVING A NINETEEN YEAR-OLD GIRL IN LOVE
WITH HIM, SO

THAT WAS SIXTEEN YEARS AGO!
LILLIAN AND WALDO WERE VERY
HAPPY AFTER THE WEDDING! THE
FIRST SIX MONTHS... THAT IS!
THEN...



DO YOU HEAR IT,
WALDO?

OF COURSE,
LILLIAN! I'M
ASKING YOU TO
MARRY ME!



BUT, WALDO?
I KNOW LILLIAN,
BUT... I'M TIRED!
I COULDN'T GO
TO THAT DANCE IF
I WANTED TO!

IT WAS THE THIRD TIME IN A MONTH THAT
WALDO HAD DONE THIS! LILLIAN WAS
DISGUSTED! WALDO'S AGE WAS SHOWING ...



TIRED! YOU'RE ALWAYS TIRED!
WELL, I'M TIRED! I WANT TO
HAVE FUN... ENJOY MYSELF
WHILE I CAN!

YOU'RE
RIGHT,
LILLIAN!
WHY DIDN'T
YOU GO TO
THE DANCE
WITHOUT ME?

LILLIAN WENT! SHE WENT TO THE DANCE ALONE! BUT SHE
WASN'T AWARE LONG! SOON SHE WAS DANCING WITH YOUNG,
ENHANCE! TO ROSEBANK ...



WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN
ALL MY LIFE, BEAUTIFUL?

LOOKING FOR YOU,
HANDSOME!

OH, AT FIRST IT WAS ALL IN FUN! BUT SOON, TALK GOT
MORE SERIOUS... FORTY SERIOUS...



I'VE GOT TO SEE YOU
AGAIN, LILLIAN! I'VE
WOT TO! I... I'M IN
LOVE WITH YOU!

WOW! YOU
MUSTN'T!
YOU
MUSTN'T TALK
LIKE THAT!
I CAN'T SEE
YOU AGAIN! IT'S...
IMPOSSIBLE!

BUT SOMETHING THE IMPOSSIBLE WAS ACCOMPLISHED!
AS WALDO COMPLAINED MORE, LILLIAN SAW ROSEBANK
MORE AND MORE ...



LILLIAN, DEAREST! YOU'VE
GOT TO ASK WALDO FOR A
SOPHOMORE! I WANT TO
MARRY YOU!

OH, DARLING! YES!
YES! I REALIZE NOW
I NEVER LOVED HIM!
IT'S YOU I LOVE...
YOU!

THEY WERE MAD ABOUT EACH OTHER... THOSE TWO AND SO, LILLIAN MADE UP HER MIND TO TELL WALDO THE WHOLE STORY! BUT BEFORE SHE COULD GET UP ENOUGH COURAGE, WALDO BECAME SERIOUSLY ILL.

OH, NO?
NO!

IT'S A GRIEFLING FORM OF POLIO, LILLIAN! WHEN IT ATTACKS A MAN WALDO'S AGE, IT MEANS ONLY ONE THING... PARALYSIS!



POOR LILLIAN! WITH WALDO HELPLESS, AND ROGER BECOMING, SHE WAS IN AN AWFUL QUANDRY! WHAT TO DO? WHAT TO DO? AND THEN LILLIAN REALIZED THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING TO DO...

I... I WON'T MARRIAGE YOU, LILLIAN! BUT, WELL, YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU! IT WOULD BE BETTER THAN IF I WENT AWAY!

HE'S MY MARRIAGE, ROGER! HE NEEDS ME! I CAN'T LEAVE HIM... NOT NOW!



AWAY FOR GOOD?

YES! IT WOULD BE BETTER IF WE NEVER SAW EACH OTHER AGAIN!



LILLIAN, TEARS STREAMING FROM HER EYES, CLOUTONED ROGER...

NO, ROGER! NOT NEVER! PLEASE... GIVE ME SOME THING TO LIVE FOR!

I'LL COME BACK IN FIVE YEARS... MAYBE THEN WE'LL SEE...



HERE, ROGER! WE'LL MEET HERE... BY THE LAKE! FIVE YEARS FROM TONIGHT!

YES! PERHAPS THINGS WILL BE DIFFERENT. PERHAPS THINGS WILL HAVE CHANGED!



AND SO, ROGER AND LILLIAN PARTED! THEY CLUNG TO EACH OTHER, THERE BY THE LAKE, AND VOWED THEIR LOVE... AND PROMISED TO MEET EACH OTHER IN FIVE YEARS IN THAT VERY SPOT.

GOOD-BYE, DARLING! I... I LOVE YOU!

GOOD-BYE, LILLIAN! I'LL BE BACK... IN FIVE YEARS! I LOVE YOU, TOO, DEARLY!



AND LILLIAN WENT BACK TO HER INVALID HUSBAND, WALDO? SHE CARED FOR HIM... DAY AND NIGHT... NEED IN AND WEEK OUT... FOR FIVE LONG YEARS! POOR LILLIAN...

TOMORROW NIGHT? TOMORROW NIGHT ROGER COMES BACK? TOMORROW NIGHT... BY THE LAKE...

LILLIAN, PLEASE... TURN ME OVER...



THE NEXT NIGHT THEY WERE THERE, UNDER THE GRABLED OAK TREE BY THE LAKE, IN EACH OTHER'S ARMS...

OH, ROSEN...
ROSEN...

FIVE YEARS...
FIVE LONG YEARS...

HOW... HOW'S WALDO,
LILLIAN?

ALL RIGHT? NO BETTER?
NO WORSE?

THEN, YOU
STILL WON'T...

NO, ROSEN? I
CAN'T! HE
NEEDS ME!
BUT, PLEASE,
DON'T FAKE!

MAKE UP FOR
THOSE FIVE
LONG YEARS!
— KISS ME...

LILLIAN...
SARLAIN?

SUCH A SWEET SCENE! SUCH DEEP
LOVE! BUT SOON... SOON IT WAS
ALMOST OVER.

I'VE GOT TO
GO, LILLIAN!
MY FRANK...

COME BACK,
ARAB, ROSEN!
IN FIVE YEARS.

IN FIVE YEARS... I'LL
BE BACK? I PROMISE?

PLEASE... JUST ONE MORE
KISS? IT HAS TO LAST
SO LONG...

AND THEN HE WAS GONE... AND LILLIAN WAS ALONE
ONCE MORE... ALONE WITH WALDO... WITH NOTHING TO
LOOK FORWARD TO... NOTHING FOR FIVE LONG YEARS AND

LOOK AT ME! NURSING AN
INVALID HUSBAND... AT
TWENTY-FIVE...

LILLIAN
PLEASE... A
DRINK OF
WATER...



THE YEARS CRAGGED BY ONE... TWO... THREE... FOUR... FIVE YEARS WENT BY! AND THEN, ONCE MORE, LILLIAN AND ROGER WERE TOGETHER...



DARLING...

LILLIAN...



AND WALDO?

LIKE ALWAYS! BUT LET'S NOT TALK, DARLING!



A FEW ECSTATIC HOURS OF HAPPINESS... AND THEN...

I'VE... GOT TO BE GOING, LILLIAN!

SO SOON... SO SOON...

ROGER KISSED HER

LILLIAN! YOU'RE PRECIOUS! YOU'RE BETTER DR. WE'RE BOTH SETTING ON IN YEARS! I...

NO, ROGER! I WON'T LEAVE HIM! HE'S HELPLESS... AND I'M HIS WIFE! COME BACK, DARLING... COME BACK!

ALL RIGHT, LILLIAN! I'LL COME BACK AGAIN... IN FIVE YEARS...

PROMISE ME, ROGER! PROMISE ME YOU'LL COME! YOU'RE ALL I... LIVE FOR!



IT WAS OVER! ROGER WENT AWAY AGAIN AND ONCE MORE THE YEARS BEGAN TO CRANK BY! ONE... TWO... BUT THEN...

IS HE VERY BAD, DOCTOR?

HIS HEART MUSCLES ARE HARD! HE'S... DYING, LILLIAN! I... I'M SORRY!

YES, WALDO DID! AND LILLIAN WAS FIRST... ASKED TO AGREE! GENT TO GO...!



LILLIAN WAITED A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF TIME AFTER WALDO'S DEATH...

... BUT TWO YEARS! I CAN'T WAIT FOR ROGER FOR TWO YEARS! I MUST FIND HIM.



WHERE TO LOOK? ROGER HAD NEVER TOLD WHERE HE LIVED. LILLIAN HAD AN IDEA WHERE TO GO! THEN SHE WENT TO AN OLD FRIEND OF ROGER'S...

ROGER RARE? WHY DON'T YOU ASK?

KNOW WHAT?



ROGER RARE IS DEAD! HE WAS KILLED IN THE TRAIN WRECK DOWN AT EVANSVILLE TWO YEARS AGO... MURDERED!

THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT FOR LILLIAN! NOTHING! SHE WAS FREE... BUT ROGER WAS GONE! AND THAT'S WHY SHE'S THERE NOW... UNDER THE GRAYLED OAK TREE, CRYING HER LITTLE HEART OUT TONIGHT... WOULD HAVE SEEN THE NIGHT OF THEIR THIRD REUNION! POOR LILLIAN!



SUDDENLY, A THIN DRAPED IN THE BUSHES BOARDS LILLIAN'S HORROR. ALMOST UNINTELLIGIBLE VOICE CALLS HER NAME...

LILLIAN IS THAT... YOU?

WHO... WHO'S THERE?



ROGER STANDS BEFORE HER! HIS DECAYED AND ROTTEN BODY CARRIES THE PUTRID ODOR OF DEATH.

I... I CAME BACK, LILLIAN! I PROMISED...

KEEP AWAY! KEEP AWAY!



SHE SCREAMS! HER TERRIFIED SHRIEK BOUNCES ACROSS THE LAKE! ROGER CANNOT UNDERSTAND! HE MOVES TOWARD HER...

IT'S ME, LILLIAN! DON'T CRY OUT! DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME?

YAAAAAAAH!



LILLIAN'S FURY FIGHTS WIND AGAINST ROGER'S TATTERED CHEST AS HE GRABS HER TO HIM.

DON'T YOU LEAVE ME ANYMORE, LILLIAN!

EEEEEE

CONFUSED... BEMULDERED... THE CORPSE OF ROGER HAD TRIED TO COMFORT THE HYSTERICAL SCREAMING WOMAN.

I ATTEMPT I HAD TO COME... SO I CAME! I WALKED ALL THE WAY TWELVE MILES.

AAAAGH

SUDDENLY, THE SCREAMING STOPS! LILLIAN SOBS QUIETLY, STARRING AT THE DECORATED FACE SO CLOSE TO HERS...

THAT'S BETTER! ISN'T IT?

THREE!

ADORET!



POOR LILLIAN! SHE RECOGNIZES ROGER, NOW! SHE SEES HIM CLEARLY, NOT THE UGLY, ROTTING MULK BEFORE HER... BUT AS HE WAS... LONG AGO...

ROGER DARLING! IT IS YOU!

YES, LILLIAN! IT IS ME!



THE SHOCK HAD BEEN TOO MUCH FOR LILLIAN! SHE HAD GONE COMPLETELY OUT OF HER MIND! SHE IS STARK RAVENS MAD!

THE NIGHT GRASS GROWS, AND DAY GAMES OVER THE LAKE! UNDER THE OLD CHARLED OAK ARE TWO BODIES... ONE, A SMILING LADY, RECENTLY DECORATED... THE OTHER, A PUTRID, DECAYED, GRIMING GENTLEMAN, LONG DEAD.

HEE, HEH! I HOPE YOU ENJOYED THIS ~~EMERGENCY~~ TRIP! OFTEN ROGER CERTAINLY KEPT HIS PROMISE, DIDN'T HE? HE CAME BACK IN FIVE YEARS AS HE SAID HE WOULD, EVEN IF HE HAD TO GO HIMSELF UP OUT OF A GRAVE TO DO IT! AND LILLIAN! WELL, LILLIAN WAS CRAZY TO SEE HIM, WASN'T SHE? SHE NOW! SEE YOU IN MY OWN BOOK... 'THE HAUNT OF FEAR'

OH, ROGER DEAREST! WE'RE TOGETHER NOW FOR ALWAYS! KISS ME!



WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE STORIES IN THIS BOOK? SEND YOUR COMMENTS TO THE VAULT OF HORROR P.O. BOX WEST PLAINS MO 65075

THE ORDER OF

THE VAULT OF HORROR



HORROR

OBJECTIONABLE 1950s EC COMICS!



NO. 9
OCT

THE VAULT OF



200
2TH
CANADA

HORROR

FEATURING...



THE GRIPKEEPER



THE GRIPKEEPER



THE GRIPKEEPER

THAT'S IT! THAT'S IT!
DRIVE THE STAKE THROUGH
HIS PUMPING HEART



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CRYPT #1



CRYPT #2



CRYPT #3



CRYPT #4



CRYPT #5



CRYPT #6



SCI #1



SCI #2



SCI #3



SCI #4



SCI #5



SCI #6



SHOCK #1



SHOCK #2



SHOCK #3



SHOCK #4



SHOCK #5



SHOCK #6

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THE VAULT OF HORROR!



HEH, HEH, HEH! WELL, RATHER YOUNG, SIDDIES, FOR ANOTHER
GROSSOME TALE FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION HERE IN THE *VAULT
OF HORROR!* THIS ONE STEMS FROM THE EXCITING LIFE UNDER THE
BIG TOP. YES, THE *CIRCUS!* FROM ITS PULSATING BEGINNING TO THE
FINAL *SMOOTHER* CLIMAX, I KNOW YOU'LL FIERCELY ENJOY THE
STORY I CALL...

ABOUT FACE!

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE NOW PRESENT
THE GREATEST LIVING WILD ANIMAL TRAINER
IN THE WORLD! HER SENSATIONAL FEATS OF
DARING MAKE BRAVE MEN TREMBLE! I GIVE
YOU THE ONE AND ONLY

LYDIA ARMSTRONG!

Frank
Lloyd
Clegg

LYDIA ARMSTRONG'S "BEAUTY" AND "BRAVERY" WERE SYNONYMOUS WITH HER NAME. AND THE AUDIENCE WAS SPELLBOUND AS SHE PUT THE BIG CATS THROUGH THEIR PACES!



SHE RISKED DEATH AGAIN AND AGAIN WHILE SHE PERFORMED. AND SHE CLIMAXED HER ACT BY LYING FLAT ON HER BACK, UNARMED, WITH HER HANDS BENEATH HER.



SLOWLY, THE HUGE BEAST DID HER BIDDING! HE STOOD OVER HER SUPPLE FORM THEN BENT HIS SHARPY HEAD AT HER COMMAND, HIS MOUTH OPENED.



THEN, WHILE THE AUDIENCE GASPED, SHE LET THE LION'S MAW CLOSE ABOUT HER FACE!



THE CROWD'S THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE ROLLED THROUGH THE BIG TOP LIKE THUNDER! LYDIA ARMSTRONG TOOK SEVERAL BOWS.



THOSE WHO SAW THE BLEEK BLACK PANTHER CROUCH TO SPRING AND WHO CRIED OUT IN BARRING COULD NOT BE HEARD ABOVE THE TUMULTUOUS ORATION! THE BEAUTIFUL LYDIA TURNED TO LEAVE!



OVER AND OVER THEY ROLLED IN THE CENTER OF THE CIRCUS AS THE PANTHER CLAWED HER BODY AND TORN VICIOUSLY AT HER FACE! BAREHAGED, LYDIA FIGHTED VALIANTLY!



SPREADS OF HER FLESH AND CLOTHING WERE STREWN ABOUT THE HISS BEFORE HER ASSISTANTS FINALLY BUSED THE BLOOD-MAD PANTHER AND CARRIED LYDIA OUT .



THEY RUSHED HER TO THE HOSPITAL . BUT THERE WAS LITTLE THE SURGEONS COULD DO !



SHE'S BEEN TERRIBLY RIPPED AND TORN!

... LUCKY IF SHE LIVES!

... HER FACE? HOW... HOW HORRIBLE!

HEH! HEH! WELL, LYDIA LIVED! THEY HAD PATCHED HER BODY UP TILL IT WAS GOOD AS NEW... BUT THERE WAS NOTHING THEY COULD DO TO FIX HER FACE! SHE WORE A BLACK VEIL TO HIDE THE HORROROUS SIGHT, AND SHE BROODED DEEPLY! HEH! HEH!



STOP! DON'T YOU DARE TAKE A PICTURE OF ME! SO AWAY! LEAVE ME ALONE!



OHAY, MISS ARMSTRONG! OHAY!

LYDIA ARMSTRONG RETIRED FROM THE WORLD! HER HAIR AND CHEEKS FEW WERE THE ONLY PEOPLE THE SAW.

NO ONE'S EVER SEEN HER FACE! POOR THING! SHE'S SO WEALTHY... AND YET SO LONELY! IS THAT SO?



YES... THE WORLD FORGETS SO SOON! IT MUST BE UNFUL TO BE IN HER POSITION... I FEEL SO SORRY FOR HER!



I THINK SHE'S CRACKED UP! HAVE YOU BEEN THE KIND OF BOOKS SHE'S COLLECTING?

BEHIND LOCKED DOORS, LYDIA PORED OVER STACKS OF ANCIENT BOOKS WRITTEN IN A STRANGE LANGUAGE ABOUT MYCOMCRAFT!

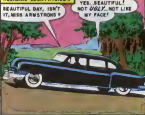


... IT MUST BE IN ONE OF THESE BOOKS! IT MIGHT BE! I HOPE I'M TRANSLATING CORRECTLY!

LATE INTO THE NIGHT SHE READ, AND OFTEN TILL THE NEXT MORNING.



WHEN SHE WASN'T COOPED UP IN HER ROOM, HER CHAUFFEUR WOULD DRIVE HER THROUGH THE SUN-BOUNDED COUNTRYSIDE...



YOU SHOULDN'T TALK LIKE THAT, MISS ARMSTRONG! GOOD LOOKS AREN'T EVERYTHING! NOBODY LIKES TO EAT A ROTTEN APPLE JUST BECAUSE THE SKIN IS PRETTY! IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE THAT COUNTS!



I DO MEAN IT! TO ME, YOUR FACE DOESN'T MEAN A FAINER! I LIKE YOU AND WORK FOR YOU BECAUSE YOU... WELL, BECAUSE YOU'RE A WONDERFUL GIRL.



YOU DON'T? ALL RIGHT... THEN I'LL AROUND IT!



WHA... WHY DID YOU STOP? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?



AFTER THAT, THEY WENT DRIVING MORE OFTEN! AND LYDIA FOUND HERSELF DEVOTING LESS AND LESS TIME TO THE READING OF WITCHCRAFT BOOKS!



HE'S BEEN WONDERFUL! HE'S GIVEN ME AN ENTIRELY NEW FUTURE TO LOOK FORWARD TO!

HICK, HEN! YES, LYDIA VERY QUICKLY FELL IN LOVE WITH STEVE! THE MONTHS PASSED...

BUT STEVE! HOW CAN YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE YOU LOVE ME! YOU'VE NEVER SEEN MY FACE!

CAN'T YOU UNDERSTAND! I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE! I LOVE YOU FOR WHAT YOU ARE!



IF YOU WEAR THAT, STEVE, THEN YOU WON'T MIND PROVING IT TO ME, WILL YOU?



ERY OH, OF COURSE NOT!

SOOO! I HOPE YOU'VE BEEN HONEST WITH ME AS WELL AS YOURSELF, BECAUSE I'M GOING TO REMOVE MY VEIL!



WHAT??

THIS WAS A SURPRISE! STEVE NEVER EXPECTED THAT TO HAPPEN BUT HE REAGED HIMSELF! WITH TREMBLING HANDS LYDIA TOOK THE VEIL FROM HER FACE!



EVERY FIBRE AND MUSCLE IN STEVE'S BODY SHUDDERED AT THE TWISTED, SHARPLY BENT THAT HAS BEEN BARED TO HIS EYES... AND ONLY HIS IRON WILL KEEP HIM FROM FAINTING!



THEY STARED AT ONE ANOTHER FOR LONG, AMAZING MINUTES! DROPLETS OF GREAT FORTUNE ON HIS BROW AS STEVE STRAINED TO KEEP HIS COURTEANAGE PASSIVE! THEN SUDDENLY LYDIA FLUNG HERSELF INTO HIS ARMS, SCREAMING HYSTERICALLY FOR JOY!



OH, STEVE! STEVE, MY DARLING!

IN LYDIA'S EYES, STEVE HAD PROVEN HIS LOVE FOR HER, AND SHE WAS VERY HAPPY. THEN ONE NIGHT SHE FINALLY FOUND WHAT SHE HAD BEEN SEARCHING FOR IN HER MANY BOOKS.

HERE IT IS! BUT...HOW THAT I KNOW STEVE LOVES ME, IT DOESN'T SEEM SO IMPORTANT!



THROUGH LONG HEART HOURS SHE READ AND TRANSLATED THE WEIRD CRYPTIC PASSAGES, AND WHEN SHE HAD FINALLY FINISHED

SEE...JUST AS WELL THAT IT'S *NOT* IMPORTANT! I HAVEN'T THE NERVE FOR *THAT*!



LYDIA THUST THE BOOKS ASIDE AND FORGOT ABOUT THEM! SHE AND STEVE WERE TOGETHER ALWAYS. BUT ONE DAY, SEVERAL MONTHS LATER, SHE NOTICED A CHANGE IN STEVE! AND IT WORRIED HER!



IS ANYTHING WRONG, DEAR?

IT'S NOTHING, LYDIA! I...I'VE JUST BEEN THINKING ABOUT MY FUTURE! I'VE BEEN WANTING TO SET MYSELF UP IN BUSINESS, AND QUITE LATELY!



YOU SEE, DARLING. I WANT TO EARN ENOUGH MONEY SO YOU WON'T FEEL THAT YOU'RE SUPPORTING *ME*! I WANT YOU TO BE PROUD OF ME... ONLY IT TAKES MONEY TO GET STARTED!

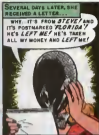
I KNOW, STEVE! HOW MUCH WILL YOU NEED?



OH...A LOT! I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY! WHY?

I HAVE *PLENTY* OF MONEY! WHY NOT LET ME START YOU IN BUSINESS? YOU CAN PAY ME BACK LATER!



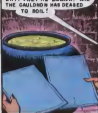


THEN SHE TOOK BOTH PHOTOS AND DIPPED THEM INTO THE SEETHING BOWL...

FERVENTLY WHISPERING A BLACK INCANTATION, SHE WAITED A SPECIFIC LENGTH OF TIME...

AND THEN WITHDREW THE PHOTOGRAPHS!

WHY? THEY'RE BLANK! AND THE CAULDRON HAS DEEDED TO BOIL!



DID IT WORK? I MUST SEE! A MIRROR! OH, I'M SO NERVOUS I CAN HARDLY TAKE OFF MY VEIL!

BREATHLESSLY SHE YANKED THE COVERING FROM HER FACE! A STARTLED SASS ESCAPED FROM HER TWITCHING LIPS...

IF WORKED? OH, I'M BEAUTIFUL AGAIN! THANK HEAVENS! OH, THANK HEAVENS!



AND IN FLORIDA...

AAAGGGH-NR-H! STEVE! YOUR FACE!

FOR, HEH? I GET STEVE'S NEW GIRL FRIEND WAS SURPRISED! BUT IN A WAY HE BOG A BIT TWO-FACED, WASN'T HE? YOU MIGHT THINK THAT LYDIA ACTED A LITTLE CATTY ABOUT THE WHOLE AFFAIR, BUT AFTER ALL, SHE'D LIVED WITH GARY FOR YEARS! WHEN SHE GOT HER BEAUTY BACK, SHE WAS PRETTY AS A PICTURE!

We went behind with us:
VAULT
BUBB COOKMAN
POB 446
WEST PLAINS MO 65775

... AND READ
THE VAULT KEEPER'S
CORNER IN THIS ISSUE!
HEH! 'EYE FOR NOW!



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

GREETINGS, SHOULD I YES, IT'S ME, *THE CRYPT-KEEPER*. AGAIN? NOW THAT *THE HULL-KEEPER* HAS FINISHED HIS NUMBER? TALE, I'LL ENTERTAIN YOU WITH A HORROR STORY? THE ONE IS ANOTHER FROM MY GREAT COLLECTION OF *TERROR TALES* THAT I JEALOUSLY GUARD HERE IN THE CRYPT? IT'S A TAUN SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO CURE YOUR BLOOD AND MAKE THE HAIR ON YOUR NECK BRISTLE AND CRAWL? I CALL IT...

THE RELUCTANT VAMPIRE!



AS THE LAST RAYS OF THE SETTING SUN RETREAT BEFORE THE ADVANCING ARMY OF NIGHT, MY STORY BEGINS? DOWN IN THE DIMAL STALE-SMELLING BLACKNESS OF A CELLAR, LIES A NOTTING, COB-WEBBED COFFIN? SUDDENLY ITS RUSTED HINGES SCREAM IN PROTEST AS THE LAD RAISES? A HOLLOW-SCHERED, WHITE-SKINNED MAN BITS UP...



THE HAUNT MAN CLIMBS FROM THE COFFIN... TURNS... AND CLOSSES THE LID CAREFULLY.

BE SAFE FROM MYING EYES, DEAR HOME... UNTIL THE MORNING... WHEN I WILL RETURN!

BRUSHING OFF THE BITS OF SOIL THAT CLING TO HIS SHabby CLOTHES, THE WEIRD FIGURE CLIMBS THE RICKETY STAIRS THAT LEAD FROM HIS SUBTERRANEAN REFUGE...

IF I'M LATE AGAIN, I'LL LOSE MY JOB! THEN... THEN! BACK TO KILLING!

OUT OF THE ABANDONED HUBB OF A ONCE PROUD LOFT BUILDING, HE MOVES, DOWN NARROW, TWISTING STREETS... NOW DESERTED BY THE FACTORY WORKERS THAT THROW THEM DURING THE DAY...

... AND THAT WOULD BE A SHAME... WHEN THIS WAY IS SO MUCH EASIER!

... ON INTO THE HEART OF THE CITY? AT THE DOORWAY TO AN IMPOSING BUILDING, THE STRANGE FIGURE STOPS... SMILES AT THE SIGN POSTED THERE... THEN ENTERS...

AM! TWO MINUTES TO NINE! I'M EARLY!

CENTRAL CITY BLOOD DONOR CENTER

GIVE A PINT TODAY!
SAVE A LIFE TOMORROW!
OPEN EVERY NIGHT TILL NINE P.M.!

HE IS GREETED BY AN ANXIOUS, OVERWEIGHT MAN...

AM! MR. DRINK! THANK HEAVENS YOU'RE EARLY! I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT UP-TOWN! GOOD EVENING!

EVENING, MR. CROSS!

MR. DRINK WATCHES AS MR. CROSS STAMPS FROM THE BLOOD DONOR CENTER AND LOCKS THE DOOR? THEN HE PICKS UP THE RING OF KEYS, THE CLOCK, AND THE RAGGED CAP...

THE PERFECT JOB FOR A VAMPIRE!

MR. DRINK UNLOCKS THE DOOR MARKED "BLOOD BANK... REFRIGERATED, KEEP OUT" AND GOES IN! ON THE SHELVES ARE ROWS OF BOTTLES FILLED WITH BLOOD...

WHAT A CREEP! A NIGHT WAGON-MAN IN A BLOOD BANK?

MR. DRINK UNLOCKS THE DOOR MARKED "BLOOD BANK... REFRIGERATED, KEEP OUT" AND GOES IN! ON THE SHELVES ARE ROWS OF BOTTLES FILLED WITH BLOOD...

HEH, HEH! YES, RIDDIES! IT'S JUST AS YOU SUSPECTED! MR. DRINK IS A KAMPF! A LAZY VAMPIRE! UNTIL THE IDEA OF GETTING A JOB IN A BLOOD BANK OCCURRED TO MR. DRINK, HE HAD TO GO ABOUT GETTING HIS BLOOD IN THE USUAL WAY... BY KILLING PEOPLE! BUT

THIS WAY IS MUCH EASIER... AND SO MUCH LESS BURGALARDE!



AFTER MR. DRINK HAS SATISFIED HIS APPETITE...



NOW TO DRAIN THE RECORDS OF THE GAF'S DONATIONS!

RECORDS

MR. DRINK UNLOCKS THE DOOR TO THE OFFICE WHERE THE RECORDS ARE KEPT AND...



'THE RECORD BOOKS' THEY'RE NOT HERE!

FEAR CLUTCHES AT MR. DRINK'S VAMPIRE HEART...

'WHAT LL I DO? THEY'LL FIND OUT THAT BLOOD IS MISSING IF I DON'T CHANGE THE RECORDS! THEY'LL ACCUSE ME... AND I'LL BE EXPOSED!



MR. DRINK RUSHES FROM THE BLOOD DONOR CENTER... CARRYING A SMALL BLACK BAG...



I'VE GOT TO REPLACE THE BLOOD I'VE TAKEN!

ON A DARK DESERTED STREET, MR. DRINK WAITS IN THE SHADOWS OF A DOORWAY



SOMEONE... IS COMING!

THE NIGHT IS FILLED WITH THE SCREAMS OF A DYING MAN, AS THE BLOOD IS DRAINED FROM HIS BODY!



AAAAAGH!

THE NEXT NIGHT, WHEN MR. DRINK COMES TO HIS JOB AT THE BLOOD DONOR CENTER, THERE IS AN UNUSUAL MEETING TAKING PLACE...

WHAT'S GOING ON, RALPH? IT'S PAST CLOSING TIME!

MR. CROSS HAS CALLED A MEETING OF THE STAFF, MR. DRINK! HE HAS AN ANNOUNCEMENT...



MR. CROSS CLEARS HIS THROAT, AND A HUSH FALLS OVER THE GATHERING... LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! I HAVE CALLED THIS MEETING TO ANNOUNCE THAT UNLESS THE CENTER TAKES IN TWICE THE AMOUNT OF BLOOD IT HAS BEEN TAKING IN, THE HOME OFFICE IS GOING TO CLOSE US UP. OUR EQUIPMENT WILL BE SENT TO ANOTHER CENTER WHERE IT WILL BE PUT TO BETTER USE!

BUT MR. CROSS, BLOOD PLASMA IS NEEDED BADLY!



RIGHT? BUT THE AMOUNT TAKEN IN AT THIS CENTER DOES NOT JUSTIFY THE EXPENSE OF KEEPING IT OPEN! THAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS MEETING... TO DECIDE WAYS AND MEANS OF INCREASING DONATIONS SO WE CAN REMAIN OPEN!

MR. DRINK LISTENS INTENTLY! MR. DRINK IS FRIGHTENED! IF THEY CLOSE THE CENTER, HE'LL BE OUT OF A JOB...

AND I'D HAVE TO GO BACK TO DOING WHAT I DID LAST NIGHT! KILLING... FOR



AND THEN MR. DRINK HAS A DEEPER PLAN! A PLAN TO KEEP THE CENTER OPERATING...

WHY NOT? IT WILL ONLY BE FOR A WHILE... UNTIL THE HOME OFFICE COOLS OFF...



SO, THAT NIGHT, MR. DRINK GOES OUT AGAIN WITH THE LITTLE BLACK BAR...

I'LL JUST TAKE A LITTLE FOR MYSELF! THE NEXT I'LL PUT IN THE BLOOD BANK AND CHANGE THE RECORDS! I MUSTN'T LET THEM CLOSE DOWN.



AND SO, AGAIN, MR. DRINK WAITS IN A DESERTED SECTION OF THE CITY FOR A VICTIM.

UGH! HERE COMES SOMEONE NOW!



AND ONCE MORE, THE NIGHT IS
PIERCED BY THE SCREAM OF A
DRINK SOUL...



THEN MR. DRINK RETURNS TO THE
BLOOD-DONOR CENTER AND...



"HERE! THERE
ARE EIGHT MORE
PINTS THEY DIDN'T
COUNT ON!"

THEN HE CHANGES THE RECORDS...



LET'S SEE... SEVEN
PINTS... PLUS EIGHT...
IS FIFTEEN! HMMM!
THAT'S MORE THAN
DOUBLE!

THE NEXT DAY, WHILE MR. DRINK SLEEPS SOUNDLY IN
HIS GOFFIN...



MR. DRINK! I...

COME IN, SALLY! I'VE JUST
BEEN READING THE PAPERS!
ISN'T IT HORRIBLE?



WHAT? MR.
DRINK?

WHY, THE MURDERERS! TWO IN A
ROW! THE BLOOD WAS DRAINED
FROM THE VICTIM'S BODIES! THEY
SAY IT'S THE WORK OF... SALLY!
YOU LOOK NICE!

THAT NIGHT MR. DRINK SEARCHED THE CITY FOR
ANOTHER VICTIM...



GUSH! HOW I HATE THIS! BUT...
IT'S GOT TO BE THIS WAY FOR
A WHILE IF I DON'T WANT TO
DO THIS ALL THE TIME...

...AND AGAIN THE BLOOD-BANK HAS SEVERAL
EXTRA DONATIONS...



EIGHT PINTS TODAY... PLUS
MY NINE MAKES SEVENTEEN!
WE'RE IMPROVING!

THE POLICE ARE BAFFLED...

THAT'S THE FIFTH MURDER IN A WEEK! AND EVERY ONE OF THE VICTIMS DRAINED THEIR BLOOD! I TELL YOU THERE'S A **VAMPIRE** LOOSE...



THE HOME OFFICE IS AMAZED...

ACTUALLY **DOUBLED** THEIR PREVIOUS RECORDS! THE DIRECTOR, THERE, DESERVES A **MEDAL!**



THE ARMY IS PLEASED...

FOR HIS PATRIOTIC WORK IN INCREASING HIS COUNTRY'S BLOOD INTAKE BY ONE HUNDRED PERCENT, THE ARMY AUTHORIZES THAT MR. CHRISTOPHER CROSS BE AWARDED...



AND SO... LOOK BALLY! THEY SENT IT TO ME! A MEDAL... FOR PATRIOTIC AND UN-SELFISH EFFORT IN...

MR. CROSS! THERE'S BEEN **ANOTHER MURDER**... AND...



WELL, CHILD! WHAT IS IT? SPEAK UP!

TWO NIGHTS AGO, BEFORE I WENT HOME, I CHECKED THE DAY'S DONATIONS! THERE WERE **FIFTE** PINTS! THE NEXT MORNING WHEN I CHECKED AGAIN, THERE WERE **FOURTEEN!**



YOU MEAN...

THE VAMPIRE THAT HAS BEEN KILLING THOSE POOR PEOPLE AND DRAINING THEIR BLOOD, BRINGS IT **HERE?**



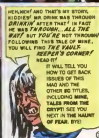
BUT, MR. DRINK, THE NIGHT WATCHMAN, WOULD HAVE...

MR. DRINK! IF THE VAMPIRE! THIS MORNING I FOLLOWED HIM "HOME"! HE... HE LIVES IN A... **RASP... COFFIN!**





...THE CRACK-CRACK-CRACK OF ROCK ON WOOD EDGES THROUGH THE LITTERED CELLAR AS THE DETECTIVE DRIVES THE ROUGHLY Hewn STAKE THROUGH MR. CROSS'S HEART, PINNING THE MEDAL TO HIS BLOOD-SOAKED CHEST AT THE SAME TIME!





THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Gappi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Russ,

I have to say that I am a bit surprised at Dave Huff's statement in VAULT #6 that nobody "can imagine what is 'The Raven'." ("The Raven" is supposed to be about, I would suggest, reading Poe's best story "The Philosophy of Composition" (1840). However, some students of the master think that the explanation given is a little dangerous, along the lines of "The Balloon Hoax.")

It is interesting that Dave goes back to ancient Rome to find a source for the poem. Try the article "The Raven and the Raven" by Joseph Jones in AMERICAN LITERATURE Volume 31 (1963). I still have my handwritten notes on that one from my academic days. There is also a piece titled "The Raven, The Parrot, and the Pigeon" in the small press publication FANTASY MAGAZINE #11 (1994). "Serenity among the Nightingales" by T.S. Eliot, now that's one nobody can figure out.

On the subject of zombies the classic work is "The Magic Island" by William S. Burroughs (1929). More recent and probably more authoritative is "The Serpent and the Rainbow" by Harriet Aronson and Wade Davis (1985). The movie of the same name (1988), directed by Wes Craven, is loosely based on the book. Dave followed up with "Passage of Darkness—The Ethnology of the Haitian Zombie." The best fictional collection (in fact the only I have seen) is "Stories of the Walking Dead" (1985), one of the many anthologies edited by Peter Haining.

And since no one else has mentioned it, "The Grave Wagon" in VAULT #5 is adapted from the short piece "A Watcher by the Dead" by Antonia Brown (1842-1814?), another American writer of weird tales well worth reading.

Finally, I thought that I was seeing things when I read "Til Death Do Us Part" drawn by Yo Carabotta in CURSE OF THE WERD #3. I was, too, a lot of Johnny Craig artwork. Marvel admitted the Wally Wood copies but not the Craig. Imagine mixing atomic bombs, numerous bookkeepers and zombies. Even the title sounded familiar.

Mark A. Bernstein Jersey City, NJ

Elaborationist? You're just making that up! —WK

Dear CK, CW, WK, and Russ,

CK and CW told us how they were born. But I want to see how WK was born, so if you can please reprint that issue I will be very thankful. Also, how can I get another form to have a \$1 issue subscription?

Charmod Peacock Brooklyn, NY

You may call me Chuck.

And you can call me—Mr. The Vault Keeper, Sir! Heh, heh! Joe! Hahah!

As I will be called upon to mention for eternity, I guess, EC never printed an origin story for me.

You need no special form to subscribe, mainly money! Write the specifics (name, address, what you want) on any old death certificate or scrap of bread and send it in. —WK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I am 10 years old. I think your comics are so exciting I read them in the dark with a flashlight. I just got done reading

"The Mask of Horror" in VAULT 7. It was real scary. I've always wondered why The Crypt-Keeper gets his own show when you don't. That stinks. Your stories are way better. I like X-Men books but your stories are the best! Could you pretty please write back. If you do you'll be cooler than cool.

Matthew Smith Utica, NY

I'm so cool, M&M's won't melt in my mouth. But I can't hardly write back.

Remember, you get four complete stories in an EC comic, but the X-Men go on forever and ever and ever... —WK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

Hi, I am 10 years old. I have been a big fan since I was 8. I've been collecting CRYPT, VAULT and HAUNT. I have all of them except for CRYPT #1. I never had a chance to get it.

Stephen Leopold Gardner, NY

As controls, mess well! You can still get a copy of any of our best issues of anything. Check the end of this column for the info on back issue 32-pagers. —WK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

My favorite stories are "Werewolf Concerto", "Fitting Punishment", "The Grave Wagon", "Escaped" and "The Mask of Horror". Great job on VAULT #7. Please print my address, I love to have pencils. I am 12 years old.

Dora Connor 7637 Bentler Pl. Channahon, OH 45321

You mention stories from several back issues. All back issues are available; see the notes at the end of this column. —WK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

Is Mrs. Thurnburg your twin sister in VAULT #7 "Daddy Lost His Head"? It certainly looks like it.

I come from England, and in England we don't get the HBO television series "Tales from the Crypt" if you could please tell me if I could buy the HBO series on video I would be most grateful. One magazine said that some of the series are available to buy already, and that CK, CW and WK are soon to be made into figures. Is this true? I hope so.

Oliver Wiggins Surrey, ENGLAND

Mrs. Thurnburg (look it up) has one of those Roman noses—it's roman down towards her third eye, which Sheela-Lunatic does that remind you off her?

The figure they are talking of making me into is ♪. How do you pronounce it? Ask ♪!

We don't know the specifics on availability of HBO "Tales from the Crypt" videos, but as to, Mr-Brits.

—WK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

Did you know that you rule? These days The Crypt-Keeper and The Old Witch (have told) how they were born, but can you tell me how you were born? You've been

keeping it a secret for a long time, let's it about like you tell somebody before it's too late?

I like your stories very much, but the Crypt-Keeper keeps stealing them!

Bryan Korlis North Beach, MD

I rule, and the anonymous editor rules the borders! It's been so long since I "originated," I'm not sure I remember it right, myself! —VK

Dear VK,

I think your comics are cool. Can you write a comic about zombies? I have been begging my dad to take me to the comic store to buy more VAULT comics.

Adam Zacc Downers Grove, IL

No true zombies (as opposed to more re-animated corpses—except on autoriflexes) in the immediate future, the CR has some pseudo-zombies in CRYPT 28 soon-to-come.

Hey, let's write a broad-side comic later! I've already got a title: "Am I Got Nothing? Zombie!" —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I recently became an EC fan when I got VAULT #6. It was really good. I loved Graham Ingels' art in "Dying is Love Slaughter!" The only story that wasn't quite as scary as the rest was "The Man of Horror."

David Lowery Irving, TX

Those stories are in VAULT 7. The scariest thing about "Man" is the pledging of mutual "wed" after a single evening's acquaintance! Maybe that's how he got into his creepy marriage in the first place! —VK

Dear VK,

I love issue #7! My favorite stories were "Land Me a Hand" and "Sire-Hole." The pictures were great (especially the dead guys!) I kept thinking zombies were going to jump at me after I read "Sire-Hole." I love being scared!

Adam Townsend, age 15 Wintersville, OH

Great, Adam! Glad we left you jumping. But, like we warned above, don't confuse a re-animated dead guy with a real zombie! You might just jump the wrong way! —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

Wow! VAULT #7 is truly a masterpiece! Every story was great, but my favorite was "Sire-Hole." When Shirley hit Adam with that frying pan, I winced from the blow to feel my head still hurts whenever I look at that story!

VAULT is my favorite comic book now. I can hardly stand the wait between issues! Thank a million for sharing your field labors with us. Vault-Keeper! You devoted fan,

Jim Davis Pullman, WA

"SLAND!"

—VK

WE ALSO HEAR FROM:

Wendy McVittals	Irving, TX
Berry Ellis	Sanford, NJ
Shel S. Jeffrey	Muskegon, MI
George G. Raby	Johns, MD
Jason Kennedy	Meriden, CT
Gary Moss	Blount, MS
Jim Sussard	Baltimore, MD
G. Miller	Sandy, UT
Bruce Stead	Boothport, PA
Scott Post	York, PA
Willy Rogers	Fort City, NC
Chris Sautter	Albany, GA
Steve Sargent	Anderson, SC
Frederic Hardy	Greenwood, PA
Mark Hardy	Camden, NJ

Dear VK,

Just got some back issues in the mail and I gotta say VAULT 6 was the best! "Terror on the Moors!" and "Baby...It's Cold Inside!" were by far my favorites. I have all the 64-page reprints and I plan on buying all the 20-pagers also.

Your mag is my favorite among the horror comics but I also like the others. Got a drawing here to hang in your vault! Keep up the great work!

Nathan Little Montgomery, AL

Sometimes I hang the art, sometimes I hang the artist. This time, you were lucky. For future reference, what's your zipper size? —VK



NATHAN'S DRAWING

Also available this month are BONGO PANTASTIC! TWO-PARTER TALES: "Wish for NIGHT," "WISH FORNIGHT-PARTY" and "CRIME" each month. Don't forget CRYPT, BLOOD BROTHER and BLOOD! Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see ad out in this month).

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1 (subject to availability), \$5 each. All others up thru issue 45, \$1.50 each. Issues #1 and up, \$2 each. Add \$6 per order (\$18 outside MD) for S&H.

We want BONGO material like you to:

6842 J
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WEST PLAIN, MD 20776

THIS COMIC REPRINTS
VAULT OF HORROR "#20" (FR, AUG/SEP 81)

COVER by Johnny Craig

"About Face!"
"The Reluctant Vampire!"
"Grandma's Ghost!"
"Revenge is the Name!"

Johnny Craig

Jack Davis

Jack Kamen

Graham Ingels

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AN OLD friend of mine set for this bloody monster job from the pen (ballpoint?) of Jessica Beebe, ST Louis, MO. And that's how I start off this special coming-of-age edition of THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S PAGE OF...

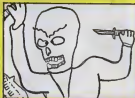
FINE ARTS 271



AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL coming from the spacy style of Sammy Stewart of Fairfield, N. Or., as Sammy says:

Here is a drawing of UFO occupants. I am illustrating a UFO book. The art of Wally Wood has always been my ideal.

Wally Wood didn't do a tremendous number of DC horror stories, but I forgive him because his SF was so good! —CK



"VAULT-KEEPER RULES!" says Matthew Griffin, Utica, NY, of the grotesque countenance above. Maybe this is what the alien version of GI' VR would look like if the TV guys had decided to do "Tales from the Vault." Below, what the TV guys would look like as definitely depicted by William Pearson, Rutland, VT.

—CK



'NUDGE' THANKS to Arton, Grifton, NY for this whin-ploose, a guy who's head was too big for the panel! Are you sure you didn't nudge this from the cover of the October 1985 issue of DC's MYSTERY ADJACENT TO SPACE? —CK

Send your contrbs (not returnable, not too long, not too big, legible double-spaced text STAR bold black art. Warning... we edit) to:

THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S PAGE OF FINE ARTS

RUSS COCHRAN

POB 488

WEST PLAINS MO 63775

The winning contribution, the best overall or most advantageous or public contribution, the one for which the artist and/or the contributor, without further notice and the work of the artist, shall be published in the magazine shall be awarded a certificate of appreciation. To be sure we mean your address on the original contribution.





Here's a chilling tale about little Peggy and her...

GRANDMA'S GHOST!!



PEGGY SAT BOLT UPRIGHT IN HER BED AND STARED INTO THE DARKNESS! IT CAME AGAIN... AN UNMISTAKABLE CRY OF PAIN...



AAAAAHHH!
HELP... ME...

GRANDMA!

PEGGY SWOPT HER COVERS ASIDE AND PUSHED HER TINY FEET INTO THE FURRY SLIPPERS THAT STOOD AT ATTENTION BENEATH HER BED...



IT'S GRANDMA! SHE'S HAVING ANOTHER ATTACK!

OUT OF HER BAYLY DECORATED ROOM, DOWN THE LONG ELABORATELY FURNISHED CORRIDOR INTO HER GRANDMOTHER'S BED ROOM, THE TERRIFIED LITTLE GIRL RUSHED.

GRANDMA! PESTY, DEAR, WAKE UP! MY PILLS ON THE NIGHT-TABLE



PESTY, HER EYES FILLING WITH TEARS, PULLED THE FAMILIAR STRONG TASTY GRANDMA'S NIGHT-TABLE LAMP...

HURRY, DEAR, GIVE ME, FIND AND SOME WATER



THEY MUST BE THERE! THEY MUST BE! LOOK FOR THEM! WAKE UP!

THEY'RE NOT ON THE FLOOR, EITHER.



PESTY SCURRIED ABOUT HER GRANDMOTHER'S ROOM, TRYING TO KEEP HERSELF FROM CRYING, AS SHE SEARCHED FOR THE LITTLE AMBER-COLOURED GLASS BOTTLE WITH THE YELLOW CAPSULES...

I, I CAN'T FIND IT, GRANNY! I CAN'T! I'LL GO GET UNCLE LAWRENCE.



DON'T WORRY, PESTY! THEY WENT AWAY EARLIER! COME HERE, CHILD!

PESTY EDGED TOWARD HER GRANDMOTHER'S BED, THE OLD WOMAN WHISTLED IN PAIN, BUT AS THE SOBING CHILD DREW NEAR, SHE MANAGED A WEAK SMILE...

I'M GOING TO HAVE TO GO AWAY, PESTY, DEAR! I MAY NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN!



DON'T LEAVE ME, GRANNY! DON'T LEAVE ME WITH UNCLE LAWRENCE AND AUNT HELEN! TAKE ME WITH YOU!

I, I CAN'T, CHILD! I DON'T WANT TO GO, BUT I MUST, SASP, SIGH...



GRANNY! GRANNY! WAKE UP, GRANNY!

PESTY TURNED FROM HER GRANDMOTHER'S CHALK-WHITE FACE AND TIP-TOED FROM THE ROOM. GRANDMA IS ASLEEP, SHE THOUGHT! SHE LOOKED INTO HER AUNT AND UNCLE'S ROOM AS SHE PASSED! IT STOOD ON THE DRESSER AMONG HER AUNT'S PERFUME BOTTLES...



THE BOTTLE OF PILLS! GRANDMA'S PILLS!

PERRY CLUTCHED THE PILLS IN HER TIGHT GRIP AS SHE RAN PACE TO HER GRANDMOTHER'S ROOM! SHE SHOOK HER ROUSHLY!

WAKE UP, GRANNY!
WAKE UP! I FOUND THE PILLS!
AUNT HELEN HAD THEM... IN HER ROOM!
WAKE UP! CAN'T YOU HEAR ME?

NO SOUND CAME FROM THE WAXEN FACE OF THE OLD WOMAN! SHE WAS... IN FACT... **VERY DEAD!** PERRY DIDN'T KNOW! SHE WAS TOO YOUNG TO UNDERSTAND SHE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY THEY PUT GRANNY IN A BLACK BOX, EITHER... OR WHY THEY BURIED HER DEEP IN THE ROFT EARTH OF THE CEMETERY! AND, MOST OF ALL... SHE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY HER GRANDMA'S PILL BOTTLE HAPPENED TO BE IN HER AUNT AND UNCLE'S ROOM.



AFTER THE FUNERAL, PERRY'S AUNT AND UNCLE DRAVE A TOAST... WELL, AN OODLE OF THE WILL IN PRAISE!
LARRY! THE OLD GAL'S COUGH WILL BE GONE SOON.



BUT AUNT HELEN AND UNCLE LARRY WERE IN FOR A SHOCK... AND SO IS MABEL BRITT, LEAVE MY ENTIRE FORTUNE TO MY GRANDDAUGHTER, PERRY BRITT... TO BE TURNED OVER TO HER WHEN SHE REACHES TWENTY YEARS OF AGE.



PERRY MISSED HER GRANDMA VERY MUCH! SHE LONGED FOR AFFECTION! HER AUNT HELEN AND UNCLE LARRY DIDN'T GIVE IT TO HER! THEY SEEMED TO **RESSENT** HER...

IT'LL BE EASY! WITH THE YOU HEAT OUT OF THE WAY, WEAR... THE FORTUNE WILL BE OURS! KILL HER!

EXACTLY! WHERE IS SHE?

SHE'S WITH THAT CURSED RANGERER AGAIN.



YES! PERRY HAD FOUND A SUBSTITUTE FOR HER DEPARTER GRANDMOTHER... ALEX BATES, THE FAMILY GARDENER... SO, THE OH, ALEX! YOU'RE SO FUNNY! TELL ME MORE!

SO, THE OH, ALEX! YOU'RE SO FUNNY! TELL ME MORE!



ALEX SAID HE'D JUST WHAT PEGGY NEEDED! PEGGY'S PARENTS HAD DIED WHEN PEGGY WAS AN INFANT! PEGGY WENT TO SEE HIM AS OFTEN AS SHE COULD.

PEGGY!
IT'S PAST YOUR DINNER
TIME! WHERE HAVE
YOU BEEN?

TO SEE ALEX! I
LIE HIM! I ATE
AT HIS PLACE!

YOU STAY AWAY FROM THAT
DIRTY OLD MAN! I DON'T WANT
YOU TO SEE HIM ANY MORE!

BUT... BUT GRANDMA
SAYS HE'S A FINE MAN!
SHE SAYS HE...

GRANDMA
SAYS? WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?

WHY I'M TALKING
ABOUT GRANDMA!
LAST NIGHT WHEN
SHE CAME TO
SEE ME...

WHY! YOUR
GRANDMOTHER
IS DEAD! DO
YOU UNDERSTAND?

OH, YES! GRANDMA
DIED! WE! SHE
SAID I...

PEGGY! GO
UP TO YOUR
ROOM! THIS
INSTANT!

LENN SPANNED HER LITTLE
SHOULDERS AND HURRIED UPSTAIRS!
WHEN SHE WAS GONE...

IT'S THAT GARDENER!
HE'S FILLED HIS
HEAD WITH FAR
FANCY NOTIONS!

WE'VE
GOT TO DO
IT... *FILL*
HER... SOON!
FOURTH

THE NEXT DAY, AUNT HELEN AND UNCLE LAWRENCE
TOOK PEGGY ON A PICNIC... UP TO LOOKOUT BLUFFS.

OH, AUNT HELEN! THIS IS SO
MUCH FUN! WHY DON'T WE
DO THIS MORE...

COME, PEGGY! I
WANT TO SHOW
YOU A LOVELY
VIEW!

UNCLE LARRY LED PEGGY TO THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF
FROM WHICH LOOKOUT BLUFFS DERIVED ITS NAME...

SEE, PEGGY! YOU CAN
ALMOST MAKE OUT OUR
HOUSE... *WAY*
DOWN THERE!

I... I SEE IT, UNCLE
LARRY! I SEE IT!

AUNT HELEN SWUNG OPEN THE HISS FURNACE DOOR AND A BLAST OF HEAT BEARED FORTH! THE LEAPING FLAMES REACHED OUTWARD LIKE GOUTING FINGERS.

LET ME GO!
LET ME GO!

DON'T TRY TO GET AWAY, PEBBY! I'M MUCH TOO STRONG FOR YOU!
I... I...



SUDDENLY, AUNT HELEN'S GRIP ON PEBBY'S ARM RELAXED! PEBBY TURNED, FOLLOWING HER AUNT'S TERRIFIED GAZE...

BRANDMA? Oh, BRANDMA... YOU'RE JUST IN TIME!

OH, MY... GOD!



AUNT HELEN BACKED AWAY! THE BLOOD DRAINED FROM HER FACE! HER EYES WERE WIDE IN HORROR...

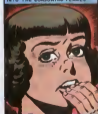
NO... NO... NO!



THE FLAMES LICKED AT HER BACK AS SHE COVERED TOWARDS THE FURNACE'S HANGING DOORWAY...



PEBBY WATCHED AS HER AUNT'S BODY WAS LIFTED AND THROST INTO THE CONSUMING FLAMES.



THE SMALL PAIR OF EYES STOOD STOLENLY AS HER AUNT'S BODIES WERE DIED IN A CHOKING RATTLE! SHE LISTENED INTENTLY AND THEN LEFT THE CELLAR! SHE MADE HER WAY SLOWLY TO THE BAR-OWNER'S COTTAGE! ALEX LISTENED TO HER INCREDIBLE STORY...

... AND THEN BRANDMA SAID SHE WAS GOING AWAY FOR GOOD... THAT YOU'D TAKE CARE OF ME FROM NOW ON!



WELL, THAT'S IT KIDDER! PEBBY'S HAPPY NOW WITH RICH OLD ALEX BATES! THEY SPEND MANY A PLEASANT EVENING TOGETHER

DISCUSSING UNCLE LARRY... WHOSE PLAN FELT FAVORABLE AND AUNT HELEN WHOSE IDEA SHOWED UP TOO HOT FOR HER! AND NOW I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO MY SWEET GRANDMAMA. THE OLD BITCH!



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! I SEE BY YOUR LEERING FACES THAT YOU ARE EAGERLY AWAITING ANOTHER OF MY DELICIOUS HONOR-SERVINGS! WELL, YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED! THE FIRE IS LEAPING AND CRACKLING AROUND MY CAULDRON, AND ITS EVIL BREW IS BUBBLING AND STEAMING! SO COME CLOSER, WHERE YOU CAN INHALE THE POUL-SWELLING AROMAS... AND YOUR HOSTESS, THE OLD WITCH MISTRESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR WILL DISH OUT A TASTY TALE OF TERROR CALLED...

REVENGE IS THE NUTS!



IT STOOD LIKE A HIDE TOMB IN THE DRAB, CENTURY-LIKE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE! THE IVY THAT CLUNG TO ITS WEATHERED GREY WALLS DUNDED LIKE SERPENTS ABOUT THE IRON BARS SET IN EACH WINDOW! IT WAS A FAMILIAR BUILDING TO THE PASSERS-BY! AT TIMES, IF ONE LISTENED, THE ANGUISHED SCREAMS AND HYSTERICAL RAVINGS OF THE INMATES COULD BE HEARD! THE IRON SIGN OVER THE GATES TOLD THE BOMBIC STRUCTURE'S IDENTITY... THE *GRANDPORN INSANE ASYLUM*...



INSIDE THE HOLY STONE WALLS, IN ONE WING OF THE ASYLUM, WAS THE OFFICE OF LYTHAM BLACKPOOL... THE DOCTOR IN CHARGE OF CROFTON! AT HIS DESK SAT AN UNMELLOW VISITOR.

BUT DOWN IN THE DAMP DEPTHS OF CROFTON INSANE ASYLUM, THE PATIENT BORED AGAIN! IT WAS NOT A NIGHTMARE THE POOR HOG WAS EXPERIENCING, BUT THE STING OF A HORSEWHIP...

GOOD MORN'G, BLACKPOOL! WHAT WAS THAT... THAT HORRIBLE SCREAM?

DO NOT BE ALARMED, MR ALDERSHOT! IT WAS ONLY ONE OF THE PATIENTS... PROBABLY HAVING A NIGHTMARE.

THAT'S ENOUGH, JEFFERS! YOU'LL KILL HIM... AND YOU KNOW WHAT BLACKPOOL SAID...

ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! I'LL STOP! HE'S UNCONSCIOUS ANYWAY!



MEANWHILE, UPSTAIRS, IN LYTHAM BLACKPOOL'S OFFICE...

IT IS THIS LETTER THAT HAS BROUGHT ME TO CROFTON, DOCTOR BLACKPOOL! A RELATIVE OF ONE OF THE PATIENTS HERE SENT IT TO ME! ITS CONTENTS SHOCKED ME!

SHOCKED YOU, MR ALDERSHOT?

YES! THE WRITER'S SON IS AN *IMMATE* OF CROFTON! HE TOLD HIS MOTHER OF THE INHUMAN TREATMENT OF THE PATIENTS OF THE INSTITUTION, SHE WRITES OF WHIPPING, STARVATION, UNNATURAL CONDITIONS...

JUST A MOMENT, MR ALDERSHOT!



I DON'T KNOW WHETHER YOU BELIEVE IN THESE *RADICALLY NEW IDEAS* ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF THE INSANE OR NOT? I, FOR ONE, AS HEAD OF THIS INSTITUTION, FOLLOW THE *ACCEPTED METHOD!*

AN INSANE PERSON IS POSSESSED OF THE DEVIL... ON *EVIL SPIRITS* THAT *CONTROL* HIS MIND AND BODY ONLY BY INFLECTING SEVERE PAIN UPON THE PATIENT CAN WE *DRIVE* THESE *EVIL DEMONS* FROM HIS BODY... AND THEREBY *CURE* HIM!

YOU'RE *POWERFUL*! IT'S *CRUEL* TO DO THAT TO THOSE *POOR SOULS*! INSANITY IS A *SICKNESS*!

MR ALDERSHOT! THIS INTERVIEW IS AT AN *END*! GOOD-BAY!



DOCTOR BLACKPOOL WATCHED AS MR. ALDERSHOT STRODE AWESBLY OUT OF HIS OFFICE...

YOU HAVEN'T HEARD THE END OF THIS, BLACKPOOL! I'LL TAKE THIS LETTER TO THE NEWSPAPERS... THEY'LL EXPOSE YOU AND YOUR... YOUR... INSTITUTION!



AFTER MR. ALDERSHOT LEFT, DOCTOR BLACKPOOL MADE HIS WAY DOWN THE STONE STEPS THAT LED TO THE DUNGEONS OF CROYDON? HE MOTIONED TO THE GUARD TO UNLOCK A DOOR? INSIDE, A YOUNG MAN LAY PROSTRATE ON THE STONE FLOOR... BOOM!!...

I HOPE YOU'VE LEARNED YOUR LESSON, MOUTON? NEXT TIME YOUR DEAR MOTHER VISITS YOU, DON'T COMPLAIN TO HIM ABOUT HOW WE TREAT YOU.



DOCTOR BLACKPOOL TURNED AND LEFT THE DARK CELL.

ALL RIGHT, GUARD? YOU CAN TAKE HIM BACK TO THE WARD!

YES, DOCTOR!



AS DOCTOR BLACKPOOL'S FOOT STEPS FADED AWAY...

O'NOW, MOUTON? THE DOC SAYS YOU CAN GO BACK TO THE WARD!

I... I CAN'T MOVE!!



THE GUARD KILLED THE LASH-SCARRED YOUNG MAN TO HIS FEET? HE SCREAMED IN PAIN...

I SAID... COME ON!

O'PLEASE! HELP ME!



ROUGHLY, THE GUARD PUNCHED AND SHOOK THE PAIN-WRACKED BODY OF THOMAS MOUTON UP THE GREY-STONE STEPS AND DOWN THE CORRIDOR TO THE WARD? UNLOCKING THE DOOR, THE GUARD HURLED HIM IN, WHERE HE WENT SPRAWLING...

IT... IT'S THOMAS!

BLACKPOOL? HAD HIM LASHED?



A WILD, SMO-FACED, GREY-HAIRED OLD MAN SENT AND COMFORTEO THE WRITHING LAD? THE OTHER IMMATES GATHERED AROUND...

WHY DID HE DO IT, TOM? WHY DID HE HAVE YOU WHIPPED?

I... I COMPLAINED... TO MY MOTHER... ABOUT... HOW WE'RE TREATED... HERE...



BEYOND THE GROUP OF GATHERED INMATES STOOD A MONSTROUS MAN! HE STARED DUMBLY AT THEM... HIS FACE BLANK AND EXPRESSIVE-LESS.

HOW DID HE FIND OUT THAT YOU COMPLAINED, TOM?

MY MOTHER WROTE TO AN OLD FRIEND WHO WROTE TO BLACKPOOL FOR AN APPOINTMENT TO DISCUSS THE MATTER.

THE YOUNG MAN CLUTCHED AT THE GREY-HAIRED OLD MAN'S TATTERED CLOTHES...

WHY DO YOU STAY HERE, MISTER FORTNEY? YOU ARE NOT INSANE! WHY DON'T YOU MAKE YOUR FAMILY TAKE YOU OUT?

THEY DON'T WANT TO, SON! THEY PAY DOCTOR BLACKPOOL TO KEEP ME HERE.

AT THAT MOMENT, DOCTOR BLACKPOOL ENTERED THE BARE WARD...

GET UP, FORTNEY! LEAVE HIM ALONE!

I'M ONLY TRYING TO COMFORT HIM! YOU...

DOCTOR BLACKPOOL SWUNG OUT AT THE OLD MAN, LASHING HIM ACROSS THE CHEEK.

I SAID... LEAVE HIM ALONE!



THE MURK, DUMB-FACED INMATE WHO HAD BEEN STARRING BLANKLY AT THE BRUTAL SCENE SUDDENLY MOVED FORWARD! HIS EYES WERE WIDE NOW... HIS MOUTH TWISTED IN AN ANGRY GRIN...

NO, CLAP! NO! I'M NOT HURT...

KEEP AWAY! KEEP AWAY, YOU OVERBORN. GUARDS! GUARDS!



CLAP SMASHED AT THE DOCTOR WITH A HUGE FIST AND SAVAGELY SMASHED THE OTHER INMATE INTO THE DOCTOR, SCREAMING SOB.

GUARDS! YAAAAAH!

STOP, CLAP! STOP!



TWO GUARDS BURST INTO THE WARD AND PHYSICALLY DRAGGED THE SNARLING CLAP FROM THE COVERING DOCTOR...

PUT HIM... PUT HIM IN CHAINS! I'LL... I'LL DEAL WITH HIM LATER!

YES, SIR!





AFTER THE DOCTOR HAD LEFT THE

WARD... POOR CLAP! HE'LL HAVE DOCTOR BLACKPOOL WILL FORGIVEN HIM?

HE'LL HAVE HIM KILLED!



THE OLD MAN SHOOK HIS HEAD... SO! THE DOCTOR WOULDN'T DO THAT! IT WOULD MEAN MONEY OUT OF HIS POCKET! FOR EVERY INMATE IN CROFTON, THE GOVERNMENT GIVES DOCTOR BLACKPOOL A DIME OF MONEY...



WITH WHICH HE IS SUPPOSED TO FEED US PROPERLY... SEE THAT WE HAVE THE BEST OF CARE... CLEAN BEDS... CLEAN CLOTHES...

DON'T THEY GIVE HIM THE MONEY ANYMORE?



OF COURSE THEY DO, BUT HE POKETS IT! INSTEAD OF GOOD FOOD, HE FEEDS US ROTTEN CONDEMNED MEAT! INSTEAD OF CLEAN BEDS... CLEAN CLOTHES... HE GIVES US... FEELS!

SASS TO WEAR!

STRAW MATS TO SLEEP UPON!



MEANWHILE CLAP WAS CHAINED TO A NINE EMBEDDED IN THE FLOOR OF A LARGE DUNGEON ROOM! THE SHAN PERMITTED HIM TO MOVE IN A CIRCLE ABOUT THE

SEW... I'LL TEACH YOU TO HIT ME, YOU APE!



CLAP'S SCREAMS OF PAIN COULD BE HEARD BY THE INMATES OF THE WARD.

POOR CLAP! HE'S BEING WHIPPED!

IF HE EVER SETS HIS HANDS ON BLACKPOOL NOW, HE'LL TEAR HIM TO PIECES!



BUT DOCTOR BLACKPOOL WAS VERY CAREFUL TO STAY JUST OUTSIDE OF THE CONFINES OF THE CIRCLE THAT CLAP COULD MOVE IN.

THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING, CLAP! JUST THE BEGINNING...

YES, KIDDIES? IT WAS JUST THE BEGINNING!
EACH ONE DOCTOR BLACKPOOL WANTED CLAY
TO TEASE HIM. TAUNT HIM...

HUH? CLAY? I'LL WAGER YOU'D
LIKE THIS FOOD, WOULDN'T YOU?
HERE... HAVE SOME.

DOCTOR BLACKWELL PUT THE TRAY OF FOOD JUST OUTSIDE
OF CLAY'S REACH.

WHAT'S THE MATTER, CLAY?
DON'T YOU WANT IT? AREN'T
YOU HUNGRY? HA, HA, HA, HA.



SUMMER PASSES, AND WINTER
CAME TO CROYDON. COLD, COLD
WINTER. THE INMATES SHIVERED
IN THEIR SCANTY CLOTHES.

DOCTOR BLACKWELL CONTINUED
TO MISTREAT POOR CLAY.

AS CLAY REACHED CAREFULLY FOR
THE WATER, HIS PARCHED LIPS
CURVED.

WELL, CLAY? TAUNT??
HERE'S A PITCHER OF
WATER FOR YOU!

OH, DEAR! THAT
WAS CLOSERBY OF
ME!



AND WHILE CLAY FELL TO HIS KNEES TO SIP UP THE
SPILLED WATER FROM THE SMASHED PITCHER.

IN THE WARD, OLD MISS, GREY-HEADED MR. PORTER
PLEADED WITH THE OTHER INMATES.



DRINK IT, CLAY. DRINK IT
LIKE AN ANIMAL... THE
ANIMAL YOU ARE!

HE MUST BE PUNISHED! DOCTOR
BLACKPOOL MUST BE PUNISHED
FOR THIS.

HOW?
HOW?



AND SO I LEAVE THE HAPPY CIRCLE OF BARBERS AT DARTPOOL, ALL OF WHOM *SEEM* TO BE HAVING A *RIPPING GOOD TIME*... AND BRING BY STORY TO ITS INEVITABLE END! I HOPE YOU WERE *WAP* ABOUT POOR DOCTOR BLACKPOOL'S PUNISHMENT! EVEN BICE, MILD-OLD MR. FORTNEY WENT *CRAZY* OVER IT! AND YOU'D BE *CRAZY* NOT TO FILL IN YOUR DC COMICS COLLECTIONS WITH OUR BACK ISSUES. FOR DETAILS...
READ THE PAVEL KEEPER'S CORNER! 'TILS NOW!
THE END



YOU SAY IT'S A 45-MINUTE BUS TRIP, WITH A TRANSFER, TO THE COMIC BOOK SHOP? YOU SAY IT'S A HARROWING 30-MINUTE DRIVE ON THE EXPRESSWAY TO THE MALL, AND THEN A 30-MINUTE MERRY-GO-ROUND RIDE TO FIND A PARKING PLACE? YOU SAY YOUR TOWN DOESN'T EVEN HAVE A COMIC BOOK SHOP OR BOOKSTORE? IS THAT WHAT'S TROUBLING YOU, BUNKY? WELL, THEN, YOU SHOULD



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